Ed McGowin's THE TENE

"HE PUSHED A FAMILY OF EIGHT ACROSS THE LONGEST BRIDGE IN THE

THE STORIES ABOUT HOYT "HOYT AND THE DOG"

"PLANE CRASH ... AND **PECANS TURN TO OIL"**

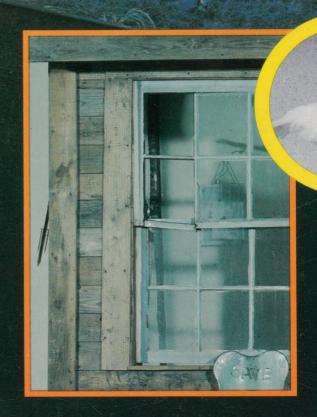
"HOYT CLOBBERS FUR BALL"

"WHEN THE SNAKE GOT ON, BOBBY D. GOT OFF"

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Corcoran Gallery of Art September 13- October 26, 1975

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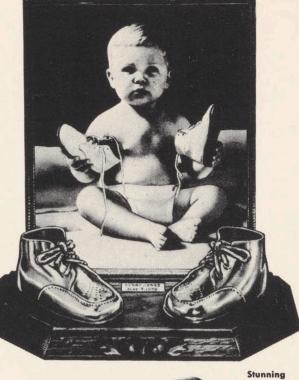
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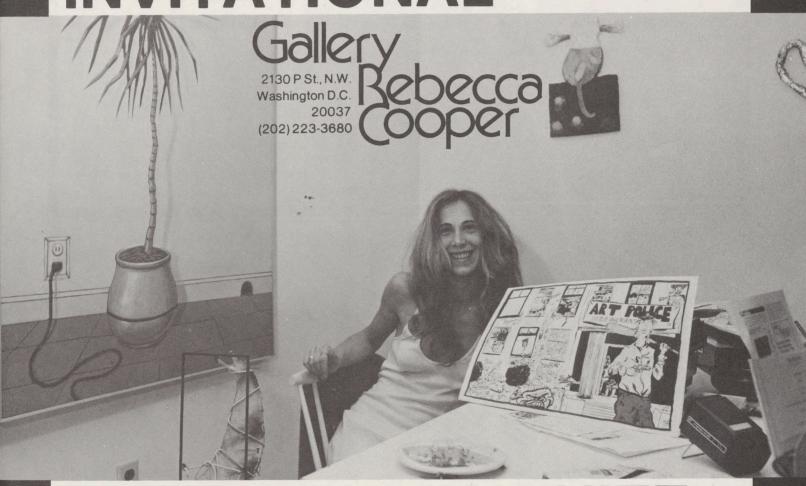
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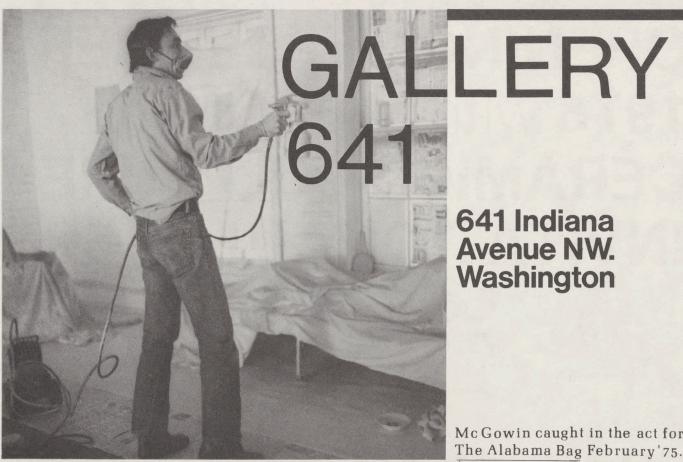
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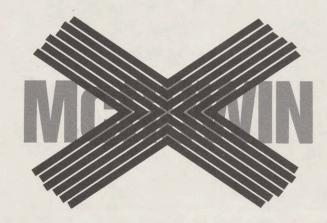


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Mc Gowin caught in the act for The Alabama Bag February '75.



Ed McGowin's

TRUE STORIES

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Ed McGowin's True Stories

September 13 - October 26, 1975

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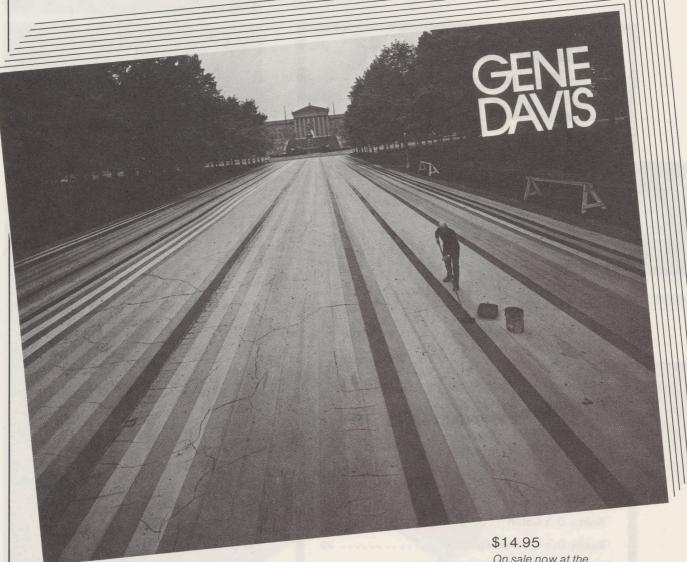
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Acknowledgements

The initial invitation to Ed McGowin to present a major exhibition of his work was extended by the Corcoran Gallery's Director, Roy Slade, in 1974. My appreciation to him goes for both the good fortune of inheriting this show as one of my first major projects here, and for his complete support of our conception of the exhibition and catalog, which evolved constantly as we worked.

The artist has cooperated unstintingly. Indeed the exhibition and the innovative catalog are his creation to more than the usual degree. Ed McGowin's imaginative and practical input has made the entire project a special

experience for all of us.

David Tannous has made indispensible contributions to the catalog; he is responsible for the chronology, list of exhibitions and bibliography and has diligently assisted in the overall development and editing of the entire publication.

I want also to specially thank Nancy Trovillion, who has transcribed, typed and retyped both the McGowin tapes and the written manuscripts; and Marti Mayo, whose unsuspected talent as an ad rep is evidenced in these pages.

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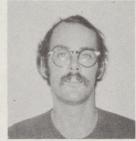
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ROY5 Introduction



PHOTO: PAUL KENNEDY

"I HAVE KNOWN ED Mc-GOWIN for nearly a decade and regard him as a close friend, colleague, and a fellow artist of great independence. It thus gives me particular pleasure, as director of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, to present this major exhibition.

"Ed McGowin and I first knew each other as faculty members of the Corcoran School of Art. We shared a studio together for six months after my arrival in Washington, and as artists and friends we shared art, radio, sport, beer, space, and privacy. Our friendship has grown over the ensuing years despite differences and intervening episodes such as my catching chicken pox from his children. Ed McGowin has always been generous.

"My intention here is not to write at length on McGowin but to acknowledge formally his importance as an artist. In every way I regard him most highly, for he is a very serious and innovative artist. The Corcoran Gallery of Art has a tradition for encouraging the best of the avant-garde. The present exhibition and catalog further this tradition in the best possible way."

> Roy Slade Director

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JANES

T is a relief in the mid-seventies to discover that art has ceased to function as a kind of frenzied dialectical contest. We have survived the polemical and competitive atmosphere surrounding Pop, Minimalism, Post-Painterly Abstraction and their aftermath, Conceptualism: now, writing about art, we need no longer speak first about questions of innovation. Recently the indefinite "pluralism" to describe the prevailing "ism" has had a certain currency; and it is true that things have cooled off, that more kinds of art are gaining acceptance without being obligatorily subjected to the public agonies of the art intelligentsia.

As a case of an artist who, in his work, never really did participate in the sixties mainstream dialectical mania, one could not do better than to cite Ed McGowin. This is not to say that McGowin was unaware of the issues; in his statement printed in the Baltimore Museum's Name Change catalog in the Fall of 1972 1 the artist shows that he is not only aware of, but able to articulate exceptionally well the issue of rapidly successive "art movements" and the question of obsolescence. In it, McGowin proclaims his having come to terms with the recent termination of the artist's prescribed activity as one of linear problem-solving; and with the fact that in this context every powerful "breakthrough" gesture has been made. The premium placed on necessary consistency was clearly seen by McGowin in the late sixties as disabling. In that statement he was saying, at least implicitly, that he chose to retain his freedom to work in unpredictable, perhaps disorderly, seemingly illogical ways. He was disinclined to enter into the "linear/dialectical" fray.

He thought it was more interesting to go from one medium or idea to another, perhaps returning periodically to any one theme, perhaps doing certain things only once. McGowin could well afford to take this position, since he seems from the beginning to have had copious facility in many areas: he is a skilled painter, draughtsman and sculptor in plastic and other materials; when he decided to make a series of technically sophisticated prints he proved himself not only proficient but superior; he's created works using both film and videotape. Beyond this, his is a *verbal* and *conceptual* artistic personality.

One simply does not know whether his presence in the late sixties in a city like Washington, DC—an artistic center at the time, close to New York but certainly not New York—catalyzed McGowin's independence of style, or whether he happened to be an artist from the South whose development would have followed a similar course no matter where he worked. (It does seem clear, for some reason, that he "had to get out" of Mississippi and Alabama; there were, however, any number of alternatives besides Washington.) As a first-hand observer of California art during the period, from 1967-1975, in which McGowin was at his most formative stage in Washington, I find that one of my strong reactions to his work, as I have become increasingly acquainted with it, is a feeling of its strong

affinity to the artistic episode occurring on the opposite coast. I have thought at times he might very well have been a West Coast artist. I see similarities to Edward Kienholz, to Bruce Nauman, to William Wiley, marginally to Craig Kauffman (whose simultaneous "invention" in 1966-68 of vacuum-formed plastic techniques, unknown at the time to both artists, is documented), to Bruce Conner, to William Leavitt, Al Ruppersberg and others.

Be that as it may, McGowin settled here in 1964 (in a milieu dominated by painting, and a rather rigorously specific mode of painting, at that-known, I suppose, best as "Washington Color School"), and proceeded quickly to engage in every manner of unpainterly activity, besides continuing to paint. Indeed McGowin was one of the first significant artists during that period to break away from the pattern. (From my present perspective on the local scene, the other artist of comparable importance to contemporaneously work in an entirely independent manner is Rockne Krebs.) It is probably too soon to know the full measure of McGowin's impact on other artists in the area; nevertheless it is clear already that a younger generation of serious local artists evidences at least a continuation of his spirit in the present diversity of approaches seen among its members. There is no doubt that he has been immensely influential—albeit more by his presence and suggestive, experimental approach than by an imposed "look"through his years of teaching in Washington. He presently teaches at the Corcoran School.

Ed McGowin's work has been notoriously difficult to characterize in words, and even to fix in the mind's eye. Its extreme multiformity is, I think, only one of the reasons for this. The other is a more provocative development: he really is as much a fabulist as a maker of art objects. If this proves in the long run to be true, the present period in his oeuvre—and especially the present exhibition and catalog—may represent the first fully mature work in his career. For in a nearly literal sense, this project really is what its title claims—"Ed McGowin's True Stories." Yet, of course, things are not that simple. The stories printed here, and the tableau-like pieces in the exhibition, refer to events experienced by or told to the artist, mostly in his youth in the South. But they are not really transparent; the narratives don't literally describe or explain the visual presentations; the tableaux are not complete and mimetic in the sense of, for example, Lucas Samaras' meticulously reconstructed Studio of 1964 (which nonetheless strikes me as precursory to McGowin's work in general but with which he says he was not acquainted.) McGowin's tableaux are likewise immeasurably more opaque and elusive in their narrative aspect than the work of the other major artist working in this genre in the sixties-Ed Kienholz. In this connection, McGowin said recently to me, "What I find I am doing with even the large tableaux is to solve a particular problem: I want the viewer to form an image that transcends what he physically sees."

One finds very often in McGowin's work the presence of, not exactly double meanings, not intentional paradoxes, but

BSSAY



coexisting elements that seem to oppose each other. For instance, autobiographical references keep creeping in, yet they are not self-revelatory in the sense the word ought to connote. This is seen in Name Change, the work in which McGowin had his name changed legally twelve consecutive times during 1970-1972—using the artist's identity, literally, to communicate an idea about art and the role of the artist, but at the same time revealing nothing about himself. As one reviews McGowin's work over the years, one notices a pattern of alternating between pieces that refer privately to himself, excluding the viewer, and ones that require the spectator to participate, sometimes in a very intimate and direct way. An example of the latter is Clock, of 1972, described by the artist as follows: "The CLOCK, resembling a small electric table model, is made of high-impact, break-resistant plastic in a variety of colors. Numbers do not appear on the dial so that the hands turn over a blank surface. A digital recorder is installed in the base. The recorder logs the number of hours that elapse after the CLOCK is first turned on. The CLOCK's function is to record the hours in the owner's lifetime."2

The tension that results from an alternating strategy between works concerning or referring to himself, and works that require much more than is ordinarily required of the viewer to experience them, is a quality it takes some contemplation to discover. Some pieces regarded singly seem bland, insignificant, and even naive. One needs, with McGowin, to study the oeuvre to some extent, to see the various works in a larger context. The impact is cumulative and much more subtle in its eventual registration than could be imagined from a quick take.

There are works that don't fall within either the autobiographical or participatory category-two sorts, basically. First there are the paintings and drawings: those genres, by definition, call upon one to look at them, to hold them at a distance, to take from them what one wants. It is more than ordinarily true, however, of many of McGowin's paintings, that images are presented which work on the viewer's ability to appropriate psychically a kind of inescapably personal sensation of recognition—often either nostalgic or vaguely ominous and threatening—but always internalized and unique, rather than generalized or abstracted. The dog, for instance, which appears repeatedly in the paintings, drawings and sculptures, for some viewers comes to represent an incipiently frightening symbol of something—one never knows quite what-yet for others, it is capable of being perceived as emotionally neutral, not frightening. (Describing the significance of the dog in his own perception of it, McGowin says, "The dog came out of a formal problem: I needed a device to accomplish a particular spatial thing I was looking for. The dog's presence occupies a space in the room that's more than the physical space he inhabits. But that dog has become a loaded image. I've identified with the dog psychologically in a way I don't understand at all. It's become part human.")

The unmade bed, the mirror, the empty corner—such images recur and somehow take on slightly disturbing over-

tones. McGowin's recent painting seems to me to inhabit a singular territory: certainly one thinks of Surrealism, though the differences are more important than the similarities. Whereas the Surrealists deliberately depicted images and juxtapositions of objects and images derived "spontaneously" from the libido, evoking "the unconscious response" in the viewer (or the by now collectivized and even literary libido of the thirties and forties), McGowin's images and juxtapositions are closer to the surface of his felt experience: their meaning is hidden from us not because they belong privately to the artist's eternally subjective fantasty world, but because they are somehow so plain, so bald, so obviously known as much to us as to the artist. They are accepted as part of our experience almost without delay and without question. No explanation is called for by these implacably mysterious images: we automatically know this and somehow assume the artist intends it.3

There is another kind of work which apparently falls outside my categories of "autobiographical" and "spectator-participatory" pieces—that which combines, or synthesizes, both these elements. Perhaps the consummate example of this from the body of work preceding the present exhibition is an environment constructed at the Corcoran in December of 1972. To quote the critic David Bourdon's description of it,

the environment . . . was a room within a room. McGowin enclosed an interior space, approximately 12 x 20 feet in plan, with an eight-foot-high, gray wallboard fence, leaving only a corridor in which spectators could walk. In addition, viewers were fenced off from the inner walls by a waist-high railing that ran all around the piece. The fascination came in trying to figure out what was inside the inner room. Corners of the dimly illuminated room could be glimpsed in a pair of rectangular plexiglass mirrors that were suspended at an angle over opposite walls. By standing on tiptoe, viewers could see the reflected image of the corners nearest them. But the mirrors were not very 'true', so the reflections were warped. This spectator believes he saw: a wooden chair alongside what looked like a bucket with a piece of gauze thrown over it; a metal-frame cot, with pieces of clothing strewn all over it, and an ashtray on the floor; an ornate mirrored shadow box, holding a figurine, and a hammocklike piece of canvas slung over an inverted card table; and, finally, a perfectly empty corner. These humble objects and strange props, like fresh clues in a detective story, seemed full of portent.4

In a way very much recalling certain works of Bruce Nauman, McGowin in this work is calling upon the viewer to exert himself in order just to see the work; when one does so, one is to greater or lesser degree mystified—that is, given only partially illuminating information. Unlike Nauman, McGowin here seems willing to present hints of emotionally charged things or states of mind that really are, even if the spectator cannot perceive quite how, links in the chain of a personal history, and therefore autobiographical.

A possible next step in the process (if such a process can be

perceived) toward using the artist's own experience, and more precisely his past, as subject-matter for his art, is to tell stories-visually and/or verbally-about oneself. Looking back upon the sixties and early seventies, reviewing the emergence of conceptual art and particularly the kind of narrative conceptual art associated with such New York and West Coast artists as William Wegman, Bill Beckley, Peter Hutchinson, Bob Cumming, William Wiley, Alan Ruppersberg and upon occasion Robert Morris, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden and Nancy Holt in videotape and other forms, I often detect a certain aura of gratuitous self-consciousness, an unnecessary sense of veiledness or archness that is entirely gone from McGowin's new work. Certainly by no means all of the "narrative/conceptual" work by artists such as the ones mentioned has been dry, arch, laboriously "intellectual"; there have been a number of video tapes, for instance, most made in America during the period of 1973-1975, which are remarkably direct and intense self-revelations by the artists, through which they open themselves emotionally before the video camera in a manner related to various psycho-therapeutic techniques. It is a sub-genre of video art that I have called the "psycho-drama syndrome"; it relates to the recent Viennese-based video and performance artists and includes others such as the Los Angeles artist Paul McCarthy, as well as Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, and Willoughby Sharp, who have made autobiographical videotapes so personal and emotionally uninhibited that they are difficult to watch. Compared to these works, McGowin's approach seems reserved and light in tone.

(McGowin did in fact make a videotape, shown in Paris in 1974, called *Bobby Joe Carrol*, *Hattiesburg*, *Mississippi*, in which he carefully described his relationship with the named person—it was a childhood friendship which ended when the artist was twelve years old—and then continued the story of Carrol's life based on the combination of a few facts heard about him since and McGowin's imaginative speculation. Because it was related in English and shown in a Paris gallery, McGowin says it was received with a certain mystification at best, and more commonly with a kind of glazed ennui.)

In the above context, it is as though the artist at last has become confident, relaxed and self-possessed enough to act truly ingenuously—simply to tell stories. McGowin may be said to singly comprise an important part of a well-defined "movement"—narrative art as a component of conceptualism.

It would be wrong, though, to overstress the openness, ingenuousness and apparent "true-to-life" literalness of either the stories or the tableaux in the present exhibition and catalog, for the artist has clearly retained his right (and need) to employ obliquities, metaphorical images, passages everywhere characterized by a kind of poeticization, or at least poetic license. What works artistically and what doesn't, in terms of individual pieces and passages within large "narrative tableaux" (Bobby D.'s Cabin, Airplane Crash, and the recent Auto Wreck mounted at Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum), it is perhaps too soon to assess. These truly are departures for the artist, and it is not too much to say they represent an unprecedented genre in a larger sense.

McGowin has displayed both literal and metaphorical bents of mind as an artist, more the former when he was making "conceptual" and sculptural art, more the latter in recent work. The relation between the stories and the tableaux is sometimes unclear; some elements in the tableaux seem either unrelated to anything in these stories or referential to parts of several different stories, combined in one work. What these seeming conundra effect, in terms of the viewer's experience, is not an obfuscation of the narrative sense but, on the contrary, a way of applying one's own imagination to the situation—even more, perhaps, a way for each viewer to, if inchoately, apprehend in the tableux fragments of his own past or present.

One cannot deny an element of pleasure, on a childlike level, inherent in the experience of entering a staged fantasy, a

self-enclosed microcosm filled with spaces and objects to be explored. The contents of these tableaux are not altogether pleasurable in their associations, but neither are they aggressively repelling or disturbing, as in the tableaux of Kienholz or the environments of Terry Fox. It is worth noting that McGowin consistently avoids introducing the figure into his work. In this he is unlike Kienholz, Paul Thek, Duane Hanson, George Segal—in fact most other American artists (exceptions are Oldenburg, with his *Store* or *Bedroom*, and Samaras, with his *Studio*) who have worked in tableau format. The person behind the residue presented in McGowin's tableaux is only implicitly present, and is not by any means always the artist himself. But a strong sense either of a *person* or of a specific *event* certainly always remains.

McGowin has said that he would like to create in his tableaux a situation the viewer could enter "as though he were walking into one of my paintings. The quality of the experience should be mysterious, subtle, complicated. There should be enough information so that whoever walks in would form a picture of the person who was in my mind when I made the work."

The continual intimate relationship between the environmental pieces and the paintings should be emphasized. The implications of McGowin's recent activity as a painter are difficult to assess, though partially clarified by the paintings' expressed nature as proposals. He has during various phases of his career made abstract paintings, and, he says, he entertains the possibility that he may in the future return to abstract painting. Yet he describes all of his representational paintings (some of which are not only considerably ambitious in scale but remarkably successful independent works by any standard) as "proposals for tableaux." (Also, not surprisingly, he makes extraordinary drawings.) These paintings often are most distinctive for their oddly compressed, or skewed, sense of space; the juxtapositions of objects within them and the presentations of architectural relationships are seen, as one examines them, to be patently distorted. Yet this spatial eccentricity takes more than a first look to perceive. An impossibly angled ceiling and corner, or a strangely scaled foreground object (such as an oversized representation of the repeatedly encountered dog), or an overall feeling of a manneredly architectonic structure—for instance, in a subtle trompe l'oeil vein-such devices are difficult to describe but impossible to ignore. Equally distinctive and equally difficult to describe is the peculiar quality of McGowin's palette; he generally avoids clear primaries, using strangely equivocal, flat hues—oddly stagnant mauves and pinks and dead blues that reinforce the slightly remote, stilted, and mannered spirit of the works as a whole. With the use of different devices, similar disjunctive elements carry over into the three-dimensional pieces.

The central issue that emerges in the present exhibition transcends an analysis of the artist as a painter; it isn't even nameably accessible in the elaborately constructed environmental works themselves. What finally becomes the overarching issue and content of the project is the narrative spirit in which all of the works are conceived, in which the present catalog is constructed, and which integrates all of the artist's excessively disparate activities into a complex, fully formed art.

Jane Livingston

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Baltimore Museum of Art, Name Change: Ed McGowin, catalog of exhibition, 1972, pp. 6-9.
- ² Ibid., p. 22.
- ³ In fact, the artist recently said, when asked about his use of certain repeated images, "What I'm doing is very much on the surface. I try to leave obvious, visible clues."
- ⁴ David Bourdon, "Washington Letter," Art International, vol. 17, no. 4, April 1973, p. 66.

Ed M=60win has been teaching in the school teaching in the school for 10 years - the stories one hears are all true one hears are all true but unprintable!

CORCORALV CORCOLOFAR

75

BRILLIANT



NON-TOXIC

"HE PUSHED A FAMILY (D) F EGH ACROSS THE CONCEST BRIDGENIE WORLD

I just called up old Kenny Duff on the phone. We were supposed to get together. And now things have gotten so twisted around, he's not going to be able to come up here until maybe September or something like that.

But on the phone we were laughing about how mean everybody was when we were kids. And he reminded me of the time he and Donnie Bradley went off to New Orleans one night. New Orleans is only about a hundred miles away and they went down there and they were just going to go to some of the joints and have a good time and chase around a little bit. And they got down there—they were just kids you know, like 16, 17 years old-and didn't have a whole lot of money to throw around. But they could go down there and get pretty drunk at Larry and Cat's and stay all night for just a little bit of money. So they got down there and Donnie got too much to drink and about four o'clock in the morning they were heading back.

Kenny had a new Plymouth he'd bought himself. He was working for his Dad and he had bought himself this new Plymouth which was sort of the hot car of the moment. It was a big four-door hard-top convertible with a big engine in it and everything. And it was sort of Kenny's car there, in the little town where we lived. It was very recognizable; it had been seen by just about everybody there, I was sure, at one time or another, going as fast as it could

everywhere it went. He used to run through a set of tires in about eight to ten thousand miles on that car.

Anyway, they got in this car and were heading back and Donnie crawled over in the back seat because he was so drunk and tired that he just couldn't keep his eyes open. Kenny was in pretty rare form himself. He was sort of slumped down in the seat, you know, and had just enough alcohol in him so he could just keep one eye open. He sort of had one eye open and one eye closed. But they had to get back so they took off and as it turned out, Kenny decided he was going back on the causeway that took them over the Lake Pontchartrain bridge, which at the time, and it may still be, was the longest bridge in the world. It's a four-lane bridge 27 miles

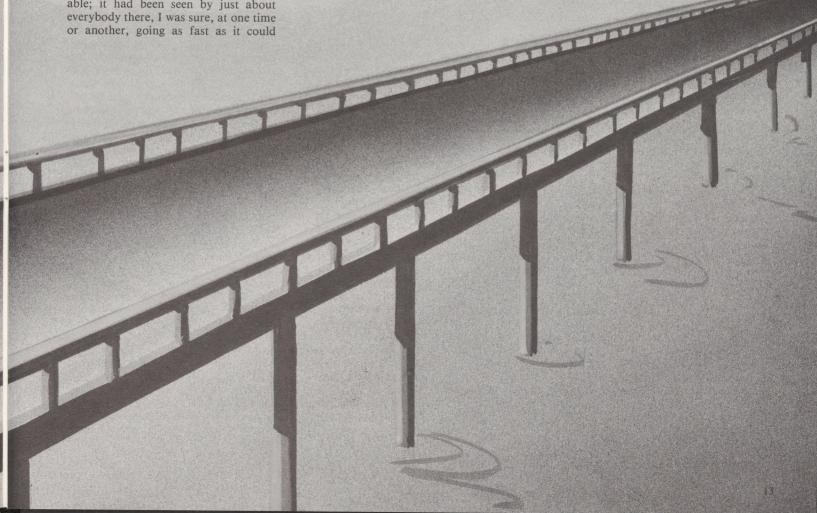
ALL THESE EYES LOOKING OUT THE BACK WINDOWS

Kenny said he had the radio on to keep himself awake and the window open and he was just cruising along. He got on the bridge and he was about four or five miles into it, just sort of taking his time, when he saw this station wagon pulled over to the side of the bridge, and the old boy was out alongside the station wagon waving his arms. So Kenny pulled up behind him and stopped to see

what was the matter—he didn't know what was going on. It was a guy from Ohio or Indiana or somewhere, a tourist that was driving through and had gotten on that bridge and didn't realize that he was on the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway Bridge that was 27 miles long, and he'd run out of gas about four or five miles into the bridge. And he still didn't know how long the bridge was.

So Kenny said when he stopped the old boy walked back and said that he thought he was out of gas and would Duff mind giving him a push. And Kenny sort of raised up and looked over there in the station wagon and the guy's old lady was sitting in the front and there must have been about six kids in the back of the station wagon—you know, all these eyes looking out the back windows. And Kenny thought, well what the hell, you know he was a little drunk, he thought well what the hell, and he said, "Sure I'll give you a push, get in."

So the old boy got in his station wagon and Kenny pulled it down in drive and he just eased his car up behind the wagon, and he bumped it once and then



the wagon went a few feet and he bumped it again, and finally they got together and Kenny started pushing it down the bridge there. And he had about another 22 miles to go and for the first mile or two, the first two or three minutes, he was just sort of cruising along, oh, about 30, 35 miles an hour, and the bridge, of course, was real flat and it was easy going. Then before he knew it he'd eased it on up to about 40, 45 miles an hour and every now and then the old boy would, like, sort of stick his hand out and wave his finger a little bit, you know, to signal everything was o.k. And the mama'd look back. You could see her sort of turned around looking back and everything. So he was rocking along at about 40, 45 miles an hour.

THEY WERE ZIPPING ALONG ... ABOUT 55 MILES AN HOUR

Kenny started getting sleepy. He was right up next to this other car, you know, and he started getting a little sleepy and he was blinking his eyes and everything. So he said he just shoved it on up to about 50 or 55 miles an hour because he was getting tired and they weren't even half way across the bridge yet. So they were zipping along at about 50 or 55 miles an hour, but it seemed pretty safe, and Kenny said he could see that all the kids were sort of sitting up in the wagon—they had the back seat flattened out so they could sleep—and they were all sitting up in there now and they were all talking and everything, and his lights were shining into the back of the wagon and the mama was completely turned around in the seat looking back there, and the old boy had his arm out the window now and it was sort of hanging down on the side, you know, and every now and then he'd just sort of flip his fingers around a little bit, but he wasn't doing too much, and he was just driving along.

Kenny said that he could tell the old guy was getting nervous because he kept turning around and looking at him. And it started to amuse him that the man was getting so uptight about how Kenny was pushing him along. So he just easssssed it on up to about 60 or 65 miles an hour and when he did they were just hitting those tar strips and those separators in the bridge pretty regular now. And he said the old guy just looked out the window, you know, he stuck his head out the window and started waving at him. And the mama was out the other window and she was waving and the kids were all sort of getting around to the back of the window. And Kenny started laughing at the situation, and, like kids are, getting meaner and meaner as he started getting more and more awake.



Detail, "Kenny Duff Portrait," 1975

HE JUST FLOORED THAT PLYMOUTH AS HARD AS IT COULD GO

So he just went ahead and pushed it on up to about 70 miles an hour, and they were just flying along by this time. And the guy was waving his hands and all the kids were pressed up against that glass with their fingerprints all over it and everything. And the mama had her arm out the window just waving like crazy. And about that time, he saw the end of the bridge coming up.

At the end of the bridge is a great big truckstop that's off just to the right. And it's the only gas, I guess, for another 20 miles or so, because the bridge just sort of comes off in the swamp there. Kenny said when he saw the truckstop coming up, he just floored that Plymouth as hard as it could go, and when he got down right towards the end of the bridge, he just touched his brakes and broke contact with the wagon and he pulled out to the left and just went right on around this guy.

He looked in his rearview mirror as he went past, and he could see all these kids all squished up against the glass with their eyes all bugged out. And the man, he was all hunched up over the steering wheel holding on for dear life. And the mama had her arms out all stiff, grabbed hold of the dashboard.

And they must have been doing about 80 miles an hour when they came off the end of that bridge. The old boy was trying to stop in the parking lot of that truckstop which was all covered with loose gravel. Kenny said he was watching in the rearview mirror and he said the last thing he saw was this big cloud of dust as this station wagon went sliding through the filling station sideways at about 80 miles an hour and all these truckers were running every which direction, and he lost sight of them then. But he did see that they had come to a stop on the other side of the truckstop and nobody got hurt which was just a

We were just thinking about that, how nobody had gotten killed in the whole thing, which was remarkable. It made sort of a funny story to think back on about 20 years later. And what made Kenny so mad was that during this whole affair, that was so funny to him at the time, and didn't, you know, at that age seem to be anything terribly outrageous to do or very dangerous or anything-what made Kenny so mad, was that old Donnie was passed out there in the back seat and never woke up during any of it. So he couldn't confirm any of this story when they got back home.

THE STORIES ABOUT HOYF

"HOYT AND THE DOG"



Hoyt had just come out of the No Tell Inn. The chauffeur had to go in and get her because she had gotten so drunk she couldn't hardly stand up at the pinball machine anymore. It was pouring down rain and they had to go out through this sort of muddy parking lot to get to the Cadillac, and as the chauffeur helped her out, she was splashing along drunk in the rain.

When she got to the car, she was just about to pass out, but as the Caddie pulled out of the driveway, she decided to slip out of her bib overalls. They were the only thing that Hoyt ever wore, because she was so obese she couldn't fit into anything else—she'd wear bib overalls, and a sweatshirt and tennis shoes. So as they were leaving the driveway, Hoyt got the straps of her bib overalls down, and the effort to get them off her body had her huffing and puffing so the chauffeur thought she might have a heart attack and die. But she got out of them and just sort of rared back in the back of this Cadillac with her sweatshirt and her soaking wet tennis shoes on and they headed down Highway 49 toward Lumberton. They were going back to her home.

She'd been abusing the chauffeur all night anyway—he'd been trying to get her to leave and she wouldn't leave—so he was sort of fed up with her and glad she was about to doze off. They were driving along the highway pretty fast in this rainstorm, and she was about to fall asleep, but just then they went around this turn, and there was a large white dog that was standing on the edge of the highway. As the car approached, the dog didn't even move. It stood stock



still on the highway, staring at the car, and the chauffeur had to swerve a little bit to miss it, and Hoyt hollered for him to stop, just as they went around the dog. So he got the car stopped about a hundred yards down the road.

A SIGHT FOR THE DOG TO SEE

Hoyt jumped out of the back seat in the rain and started sort of waddling and staggering back down the highway towards the dog. The chauffeur was backing up, with Hoyt just in front of him—it looked like she was leading this Cadillac back to the dog-and she was framed in the red glow of the tail-lights. She must have made an awesome sight for the dog because she was so huge and half-naked, with only a Mississippi Southern sweatshirt and tennis shoes on. Splashing through the water, framed in these red lights, she must have been a sight for the dog to see. But the dog didn't move at all. It just stood very still, right on the side of the road. As the lights came up on the dog and started to bathe it in this red glow like Hoyt, she could see that it was sort of a pit bulldog, or had a lot of pit bull in it.

It was white and had very short hair, and the pink of its skin showed through the hair in the rain. It had pink eyes and a rather pink nose—not a black nose like most dogs have—and it was very large and built, in a dog fashion, not unlike Hoyt. It was very powerfully built. That's not to say that Hoyt was athletic, she was just obese, but it came off she was a huge solid sort of fireplugtype person.

So Hoyt came up to the dog and she grabbed it, and pulled the dog up to her and started dragging the dog back to the car. The door was open the whole time. She had gotten out on the other side from the chauffeur and left the door open and he just backed up the road with it that way. So she was staggering back, holding this dog, which wasn't resisting, but rather than lead it or coax it back to the car, she had it sort of in a hug and was just dragging it, and by this time the chauffeur had stopped and got out to see what he could do.

Just as he got around the car, Hoyt dragged the dog to the back seat. She fell out across the seat and pulled the dog in with her, sort of in between her legs as she was sprawled out on the seat, and the chauffeur shut the door and went back around and got in, and took off. The dog seemed to be perfectly happy—it didn't bark or it wasn't snapping or anything — and Hoyt was breathing very heavily and just sort of stretched out in the back of this car, and they went on to her house.

When they got there, Hoyt told the chauffeur that she didn't want to go in.

She said that she wasn't going to sleep in the house that night—she and the dog were going to sleep in the back of the Cadillac. The chauffeur tried to talk her out of it, but she wouldn't have anything to do with him. She was still very wet and half-naked in the back of this car, and the dog was with her. She told the chauffeur she wanted him to go in the house and bring her an ice-bucket full of ice and some cigarettes and a bottle of whiskey and two six-packs of cokes. She was already so drunk, she couldn't hardly talk. The chauffeur said he wasn't going to do it, and she told him that she'd fire him if he didn't.

So he went into the house to get the ice and whiskey and what not, but before he did, he called the doctor. He asked the doctor-who was familiar with Hoyt-if he thought she was going to do anything dangerous, and the doctor said no, but for him not to leave her, to stay out in the garage where she was, so that if she tried to get out and hurt herself, he could stop her. And the doctor said he'd come by in the morning. So the chauffeur got a bottle of whiskey and he got some ice and a couple of packs of cigarettes and the cokes, and an ashtray and some plastic cups and all that sort of thing, and he took them out to the car, set them down just outside the window of the back seat and called in to Hoyt that he'd left what she wanted out there.

THEY WERE DOING LORD KNOWS WHAT

By this time the windows were all fogged up because the engine had been off long enough so that the defroster wasn't working, and he couldn't see what was going on inside, but he could hear Hoyt making some sort of drunk noises, and the car was vibrating slightly because she was moving around in it. So the chauffeur went back into the house, and he got himself a couple of blankets-because it was still a little bit chilly-and one of the folding aluminum lawn chairs. He came outside and took off his shoes, and he crawled up on the hood of the Cadillac with the two blankets and the lawn chair and set them up on the roof of the car.

Then he got up there and wrapped himself up and was going to spend the night up on top of this Cadillac, because that was one place, he thought, that if Hoyt got out of the car, he would certainly know it, and he wouldn't have to stay awake all night, yet he wouldn't miss her if she happened to get out. So he got up on top of the car, and he could feel it moving around under him. Hoyt and the dog were in the back seat, and they were doing Lord knows what, he couldn't imagine what was going on back there.

Anyway, he finally fell asleep and the

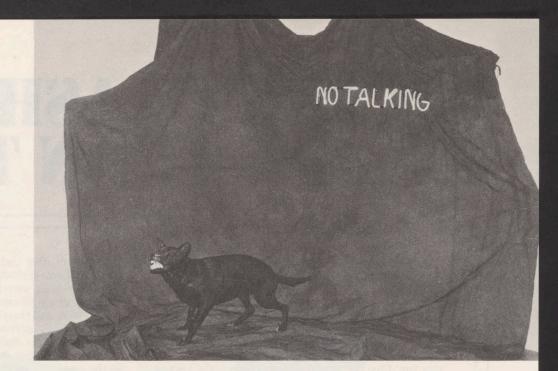
next morning, he woke up when the doctor pulled into the driveway. It was about seven o'clock. The chauffeur got down off the top of the Cadillac, and he and the doctor went to see if they could get in the car. They looked through the back window, and the first thing they saw, on the ledge behind the back seat, was the ice bucket half full of water and in it a pack of cigarettes floating with the cellophane half off. The window was still sort of fogged up, and there was dog hair, and dog footprints, on the glass, and Hoyt's handprints and footprints sort of smeared on, and Hoyt's hair and the grit from the floor of the car were all stuck on there too.

The doctor tried all the doors to the car and found one in the back that was unlocked. As he opened the door, they heard that the radio was still on—the battery must have just about been run down—and there was the seven o'clock news and the hospital report.

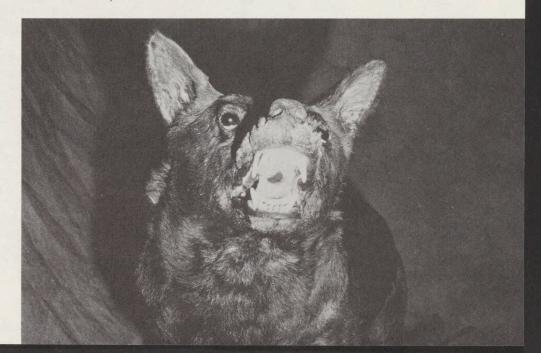
The doctor and the chauffeur looked in the back seat and saw Hoyt sprawled there with one leg on the floor and one arm thrown across her face. The dog was lying on top of her with its head at her feet, right in front of the opened door. One of its ears had a scratch and a streak of dried blood on it, and one of its eyes was almost swollen shut.

The dog was awake and gave a low growl. As the doctor poked his head in the car, the dog became very alert. But the doctor just snapped his fingers and called once and the dog hopped out of the car, and just went right off and left the property, right out through the woods.

Hoyt's hair was matted, and she was half-asleep and still drunk. Her clothes were thrown around on the back seat and floor boards of the car. She was holding on to a ball-point pen she must have found somewhere in the car. She had used that pen to tattoo herselfeverywhere she could reach—and had marked herself up so hard with this pen that it had left thick red welts all around the blue ink. It was really a grim sight-Hoyt with thick red welts all over her and blue tattoos and her hair all matted and wet, sprawled out in the back of this Cadillac, with the smells of stale tobacco smoke, whiskey, sweat and coke. She had white dog hairs stuck all over her body, and outlines of the dog's paws were traced with the ball point pen everywhere on her skin.







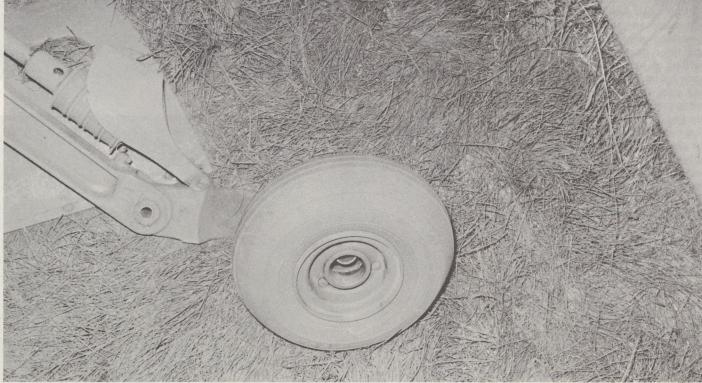
"PLANE CRASH... AND PECANS TURN TO OIL"

Hoyt could afford to drink because her mama and daddy had died in an airplane crash when she was about 17 or 18 years old. They were in their own plane and died on their own property, as a matter of fact, trying to get home, when the plane crashed. They had, Hoyt's mama and daddy, built up what was the largest pecan orchard on one tract of land in the whole United States. And there was a sign. When you drove down the highway you'd see this sign that said, "This is the Largest Pecan Orchard on one Tract of Land in the whole United States."

So Hoyt inherited this when her folks were killed. She was the only heir and she could afford to drink because, as it worked out, the drunker she got the more money she made. The people that had been running the place for her father were very efficient, they knew what they were doing, and if Hoyt would stay drunk and stay away from the orchard, then they could take care of it and it would run itself very well. But if Hoyt got sober enough to ever try to get her fingers into what was going on, then she'd have things so upside down and people so angry at her that the help would quit and they wouldn't get the job done. So as it turned out the drunker Hoyt got, the more money she made.

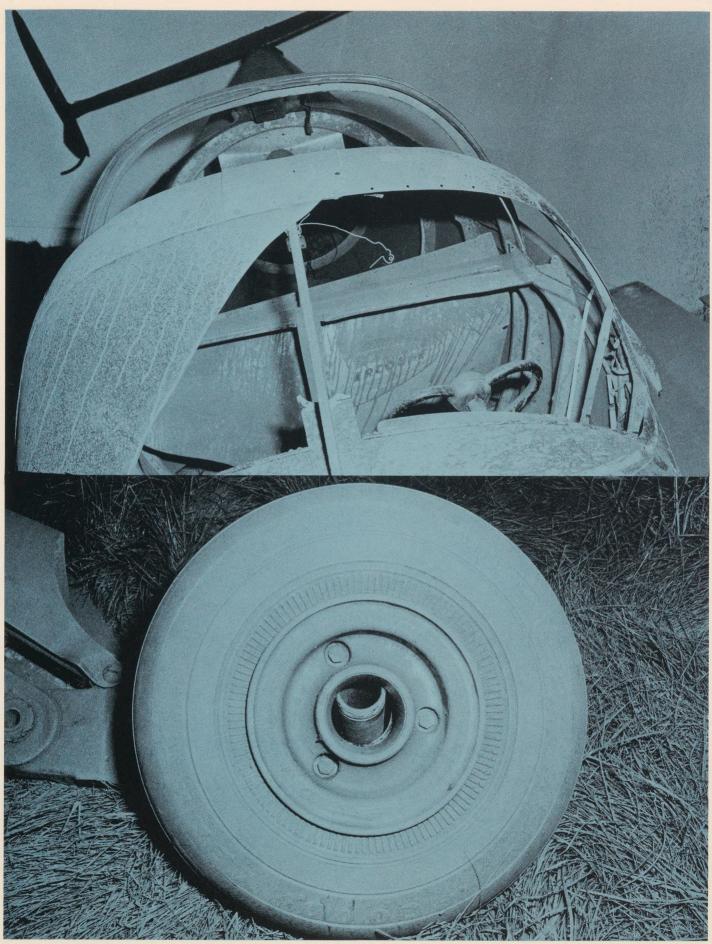
But it wasn't only this enormous pecan orchard. Just about a year after her folks died and she inherited this orchard—they had been looking for oil all along, they had been exploring for oil around the orchard before her folks were killed—just about a year after that, they struck oil next to every pecan tree on that one tract of land, and Hoyt became just immensely wealthy. She was rich by anybody's standards, it didn't matter who it was. She probably had two or three people just to count the money that she was making every day. So she could stay tanked up the whole time and go out and shoot pinball, which really didn't cost any money anyway, and she seemed to be very content with the way she was living.

Every now and then she'd just get so physically down from drinking so much that she'd have to go in the hospital, and when she'd go, they'd try to build her back up and give her a lot of vitamin B and whatever, and get her built back up a little bit and she would come out. But I had never seen Hoyt that she wasn't falling down drunk. So I don't know, somewhere between the hospital and the first beer joint with a pinball machine Hoyt would manage to get completely drunk again. The hospitalization wasn't even a pretense for a cure—it was just to get her body built back up so that she could go out and get drunk all over again for as long as she'd last.

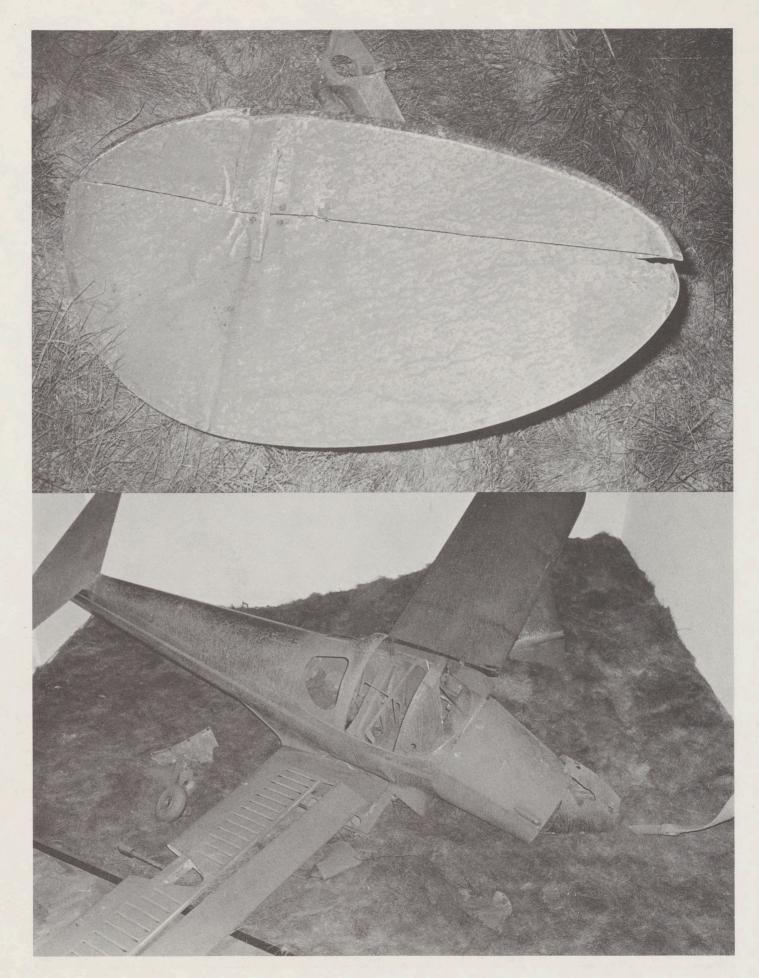


Detail, "Airplane Crash," 1975





Details, "Airplane Crash," 1975



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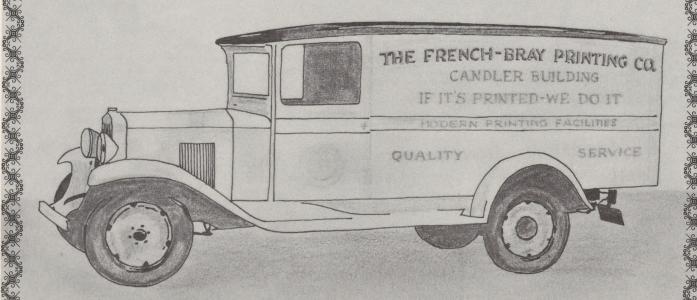
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"HOYT CLOBBERS FUR BALL"

Probably the only thing that Hoyt ever did besides drink beer that I knew anything about was just play the pinball machines. She'd have the chauffeur take her to these beer joints around the county and she'd go in and play the pinball machines all day or all night and get so drunk she couldn't move. Then the chauffeur'd take her home and she'd sleep it off and then get up the next day and go out to another beer joint and play the pinball machines all day.

The only thing Hoyt ever wore was bib overalls and a sweatshirt and tennis shoes in the summertime, and in the wintertime she'd wear bib overalls and a sweatshirt and tennis shoes and a full length mink coat. She'd have a big Sam Browne type belt around her middle, and on that belt she'd have a great big sack of nickels. She'd carry maybe a hundred dollars worth of nickels around with her all the time just so if she got a hot streak on one of these pinball machines, she wouldn't run out of change.

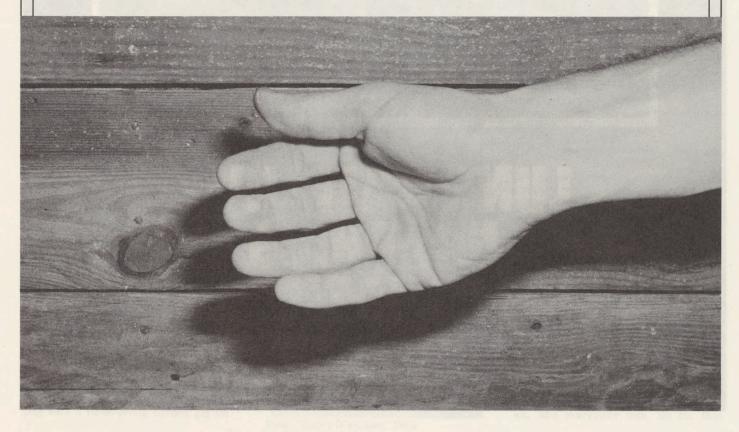
I'd see her standing there sort of lit up in the glow of the pinball machine. I knew if I happened to go in a place where she was, she'd be standing there in front of the machine, this short fat woman—165-170 pounds, 5 feet, 3 inches—in bib overalls and a sweatshirt and tennis shoes playing the pinball machine with a great big sack of nickels jingling on her side.

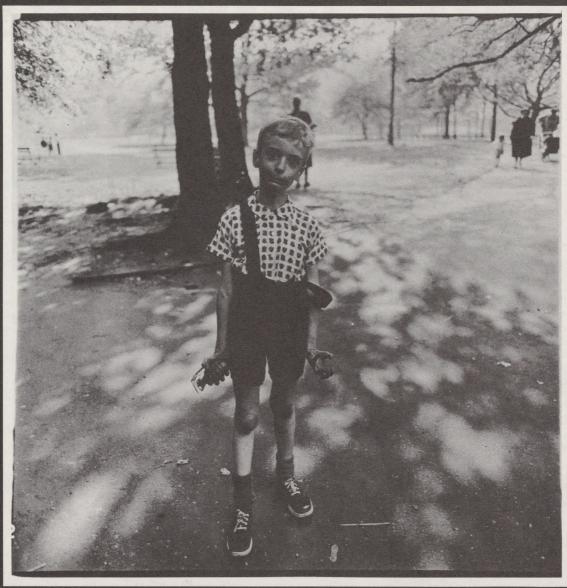
One night she was playing out at the C.Q. where a lot of the college kids hung out and there was a guy there named Fur Ball—actually his name was Furman, and he was a Korean War veteran, but they all called him Fur Ball—who happened to be a little all-American on the football team at college. He was sort of rough, I mean not only rough enough to play football but he was just a crude character anyway, and Hoyt was really drunk and Fur Ball had been antagonizing Hoyt all night long trying to get a rise out of her and she was so drunk she couldn't hardly see the

pinball machine anymore, but she hadn't answered him back. So it was about time for her to go and Fur Ball had lost interest in her.

He was sitting there talking on a stool with his back to the bar when Hoyt left the pinball machine. In about two strides she was right in front of Fur Ball and she hit him as hard as she could right in the forehead with a full bottle of Budweiser. The bottle didn't break and because Fur Ball was leaning up against the bar, it didn't even knock him off the stool, but it did knock him senseless. He didn't know what had hit him, and Hoyt just sort of spun around on one leg and went waddling out the door, flashing out through the parking lot into the waiting Cadillac.

The chauffeur had the door open and the engine running, and she piled in the back seat and off they went. And that was the last time I saw Hoyt; it was the last time I ever laid eyes on her.





Diane Arbus

Photograph 1963

Exasperated Boy with a Toy Hand Grenade

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"When the Snake Got On, Bobby D. Got Off"

Bobby D. had always been a real sportsman as well as as an athlete. He really liked to hunt and fish. And after he retired not only from work but from drinking too, he spent his last days fishing. He had a little boat there by the cabin where he could go fishing. He could just fish day in and day out and he

never got tired of it.

But when he was a young man, before he had run away to Detroit, he was persuaded by one of his brothers to go frog gigging. Bobby D. was already deaf by this time, he was wearing his hearing aids, but he hadn't left home yet. So this one brother said, "Come on, Bobby D. come on and go with me tonight." They'd come in from somewhere—it was about twelve o'clock at night, and he said, "We'll go gig some frogs over in the mill pond."

The mill pond was exactly what it says—it was where they floated the logs in to run them through the saw mill. They'd bring the logs in on the truck and dump them in this pond and then they would be floated into an area where they were grabbed by hooks and pulled into the saw and cut up and made into lumber and what not. This pond was usually about half full of huge logs, a lot of

cypress and some pine.

There was also an enormous amount of bullfrogs — that had great legs on them, like almost the size of small chicken legs — that could be gigged, and then taken home and prepared. The frogs' legs were delicious and the way we'd have them fried, sort of sauteed, was very good. Everybody enjoyed it and it was also a great sport, because there were these rafts that stayed in the mill pond for the loggers to get on. They'd get on these rafts and they'd get these big long poles with a hook or a pick on the end, and they would push the logs into the mill.

So the rafts were always there and the men would get a frog gig and a headlight, which was an electric light run by a battery and fastened to a cap, so they could go out and shine the frogs and gig them. The gig was just a long bamboo pole maybe ten or twelve feet long with a three-prong barbed gig on

Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975

the end of it—it was very sharp. And they'd shine these frogs and when the light would have them stunned they would just reach out with the gig and stick them a little bit and the frogs couldn't get off the barbed prongs. It was entertaining as well as good food. The young men liked to do this all the time.

But Bobby D. didn't like it so much because Bobby D. had a real phobia for snakes. And probably in the mill pond for every frog there was, there must have been two water moccasins. That pond was just infested with water moccasins. Bobby D. never did like snakes at all anyway. I don't guess anybody really did, but he was particularly sensitive to snakes and of course they were always around. Every time anyone would go fishing they'd push the boat out - and there'd be one under the boat. And they would get in the boat and there'd be one in there, too. And these damn snakes were everywhere, and so they were constantly having to beat off the snakes if they were outdoors at all.

My aunt — Bobby D.'s sister — had in fact been bitten by an enormous rattlesnake when they were all very young, and she almost died. She got bitten right on the frog of the foot and they brought her back to the house and had the doctor come over right away. The way I heard it, they had lanced the bite and put a bottle with turpentine in it over the wound and you could see the poison being drawn up into the turpentine. It was drawing the poison out somehow. You could see this sort of venom actually coming up into the bottle. My aunt was deathly ill for a long time and all of her hair fell out and she was just in horrible shape. But she eventually recuperated and survived. That must have made a big impression on all of the kids.

So Bobby D. was definitely not accustomed to having snakes around except accidentally. They didn't keep snakes. Nobody liked them, they were dangerous. They were always threatened by them, if they were outdoors a lot, and everybody was. So for that

reason Bobby D. didn't care to go frog gigging too much, but finally one of the brothers persuaded him and they went out and Bobby D. said he'd go just to keep him company. So they got some headlights and they had all this equipment there in this sort of tackle room where they kept fishing poles and everything. And they went in and got a couple of headlights to put on and picked out a couple of gigs and got some sacks. They could just walk over to the mill pond—it wasn't far at all from the house.

So they were walking over and when they got to the pond they each pulled 'em a raft out—one of these log rafts. It was just some logs nailed together, with some boards on top nailed together, that made a float to stand on-not very big at all really. They got on these logs and they started pushing themselves out in the pond, and shined with these headlights along up in the grass and in the logs and everything. And when they'd see a big old bullfrog they'd just shine him and he'd just be sort of stunned by the light and they'd reach out and gig him. They were going along pretty good there.

THIS GREAT BIG MOCCASIN COMING RIGHT AT HIM

But also what the light did was to attract the snakes that were in the pond. And they were having to be real quiet anyway. I mean, the snakes in the pond aren't particularly aggressive. They wouldn't attack you. They'd probably be frightened away very easily. But when you're just poling along there very quiet trying not to frighten all the frogs into the water, what the light does is it attracts snakes, and they get in the water and they start swimming up towards the light.

They're swimming up towards this float and if you're a real veteran frog gigger, you're pretty indifferent to the snakes. If one gets right up on the raft or right at the raft, you'll take your gig and just reach down and sort of flip it away or something like that. You're not supposed to be too nervous about these snakes, because it'd be real hard for them to get up on the raft, even though it's very loosely nailed together so your feet are in the water almost. I mean the raft gets water-logged and the water's

splashing up in the cracks and there are all these holes in the bottom of it and everything. And if you don't like snakes, it makes you pretty nervous. You get a vision of one of these damn snakes getting up in between the logs coming up on there with you.

Well, Bobby D. was going along pretty good but he didn't like it at all, and about that time he looked around and he shined his light down in the water and there was this great big old moccasin coming right at him. He could tell it was a moccasin from where it was in the water. He could just see that diamond-shaped head and little old bitty neck and real flat top on it and everything even from that distance. It was a good size snake coming at him. So Bobby D. sort of stepped back toward the back of his float there and took his gig and raised it up over his head and just came down on that snake as hard as he could. You know, just BAMMM! And of course when he did, every frog in the pond jumped in the water and there wasn't going to be much gigging there for awhile.

Bobby D. had just lost his composure with the snake and really took a whack at it. And he hit it, but of course the water broke the impact of the gig, and the splash frightened the snake even more. The snake was really scared. It had just been coming to take a look at the light, until the pole hit the water. But then the snake really began swimming as fast as it could, but it was swimming right towards the float—it wasn't going the other way! And Bobby D. started hollering and slapping at it with the gig and couldn't hit it. Finally he hit it with the gig and when he did, he flipped the damn snake right up on the float with him.

And when the snake got on the raft, Bobby D. got off. He jumped right in that pond filled with no telling how many water moccasins. The only snake he was thinking about was the one that was up there on the raft with him. And he jumped right off in there with all those water moccasins and just about walked on the water all the way to the bank. He just swam right through moccasins everywhere and swam up on the bank and jumped out of the water and went running home and left his gear and

everything there in the pond—didn't even slow down.

His brother thought this was about the funniest thing he'd ever seen in his life. He was howling over at the other end of the pond. He pushed himself over to Bobby D.'s float. Of course the snake had gotten off the float by that time—it had jumped back in the water and was scared to death and was gone. So the brother poled himself over there and picked up what frogs Bobby D. had managed to gig in his bag, and took them back to the house.

It was almost daylight by this time, because they'd been out there awhile, and when he got to the house he couldn't find Bobby D., Bobby D. had gone. He'd just disappeared. And so the brother cleaned the frogs and put all the legs in a pot and put the lid on. But of course with frog legs, the contractions in the muscles don't stop once you dismember them. The muscles still contract, you know, they have spasms.

And shortly after daylight, early in the morning, this new cook they had came in to start getting breakfast on in the kitchen. She came into the kitchen to start getting things together and she saw this pot sitting there on the table, so she went over to see what was in it. And she opened the lid up and about the time she did, two or three of those frog legs jumped and twitched and jumped up, and she threw the lid all the way across the kitchen and screamed, and got everybody up.

The frog legs had scared her about as bad as the snakes had scared Bobby D. So all the family sort of got up and started coming downstairs to see what was going on. And the brother, who explained about Bobby D.'s jumping off in the pond with all the water moccasins, was getting another good laugh out of this. The family asked him, "Where is Bobby D.? Where did he go?" And he said he didn't know where Bobby D. was—he hadn't seen him since he jumped off the float and went running home.

And do you know that was it — Bobby D. never did come back. The next time they heard from Bobby D., he was up north working in that Ford Motor Company factory.



Detail, "Bobby D's. Cabin," 1975

Bobby D.'s Cabin

When you come up to the yard, you first see this dog standing in front of the house. It's quiet and not moving. There's a light from a fire out in the yard behind it. The dog is very light, with skin like a pig, and powerful. It's very strong, staring right at you and putting a distance between you and the house. You have to strain to see through the space it occupies. The yard is bare and packed down from feet walking on it for years. It's like red cement in front of the house. And around the hard packed clay is dry brown grass. It's short and thin spread and the ground is scratched up from the dog's claws.

There's a tarp behind the fence that covers a bait bed. The bait bed is loose dirt that stays moist under the canvas. It's mixed with corn meal to feed the worms for fishing. And there're other bugs and crickets under the

On the wall of the house there're marks from tools being leaned against it, sort of scratched into the wood. And inside it's painted white with a blue enamel floor, shiny blue enamel. The walls are a gloss enamel, covered with dust. The paint is yellowed now and streaked like it was painted with a stick. There's a rope across the door to keep people out. The dog's the only thing that was there before Bobby D. moved in. It goes

in there to sleep and get out of the weather. It's a dog house now.

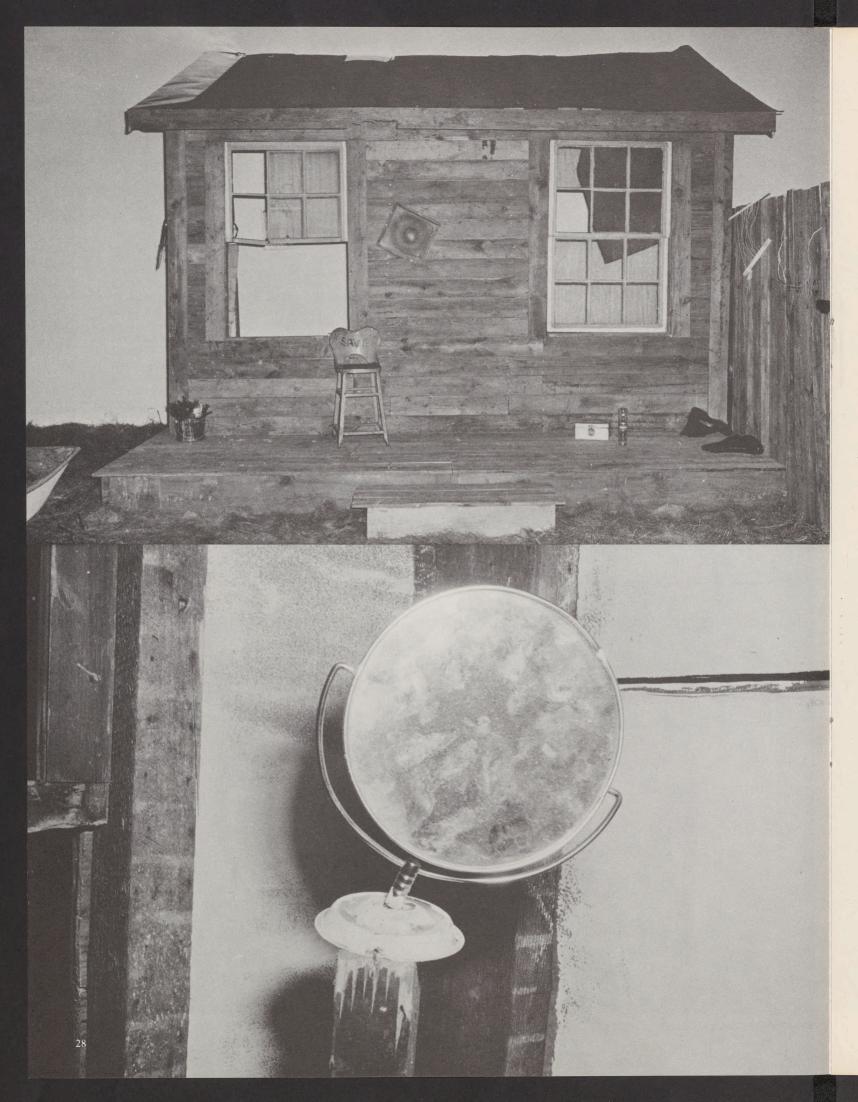
Inside are some things left by a blind boy who had lived there once. There's a stick that was smoothed by his hand and an old mirror that fascinated him; this mirror fascinated the blind boy. He had been told by his sister once what a mirror was for; she described it to him. So he'd stand in front of it and he'd touch it to see himself. And he thought the way he looked was the way the mirror felt. He liked the way it made him look. He didn't want to clean it because he didn't want to change the way he looked. His coat and his personal things were there—a soap rag and toothbrush, a comb and a washbasin and so on. And there were the letters that he wrote but never sent. His sister taught him how to write by making letters in the dirt, and he could trace with his fingers and feel the words. And he'd feel the graphite marks on the paper to know what he had written.

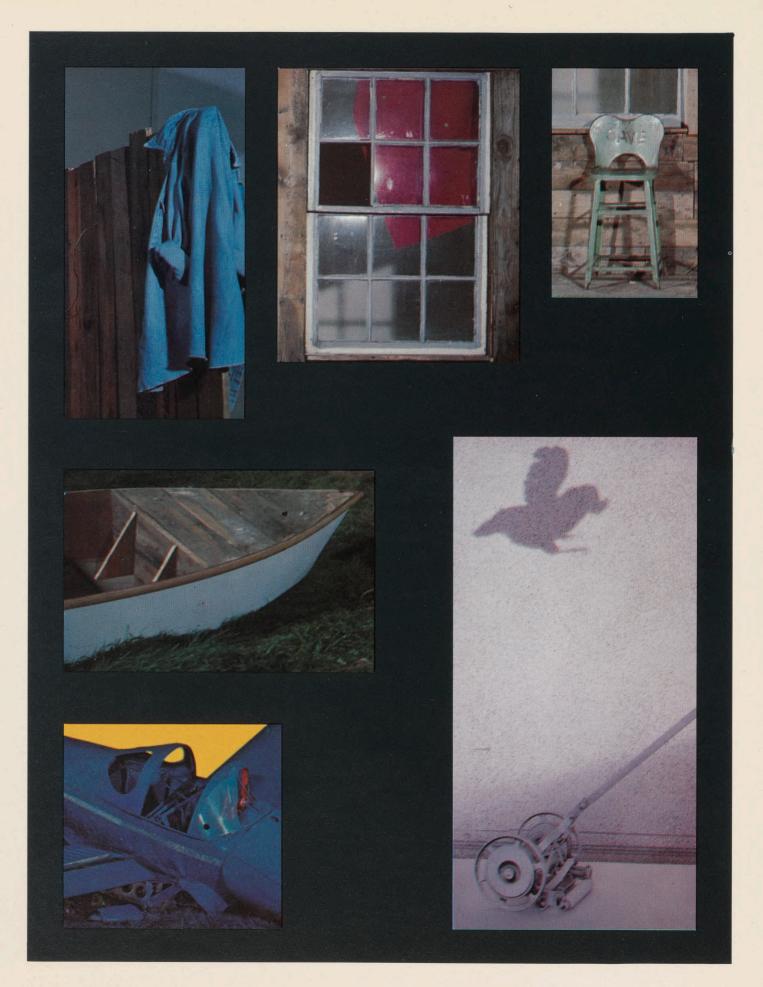
Bobby D. found this house down in the swamp when he came home to retire. He found this house just as I described it and decided that he would move into it, and make that his home. He discovered the history of the house, and he understood who had lived there before, and what had gone on before, by living in the house and noticing the things that were there and understanding why they were there.



Details, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975













BOBBY D'S CHICKEN EPISODE

This story is about Bobby D. Bobby D. had been a very gifted athlete as a young man. Of the six boys in the family Bobby D. was probably the most gifted in that respect. He wasn't largehe was a rather small man but he was extremely well coordinated and took great pride in his athletic ability. It was his principal interest up until the time he was 16 or 17 years old. At about that time he developed an ear infection, not an uncommon problem really, and his mother sent to the company doctor there in this little town down in south Mississippi. The doctor took care of everybody that worked at this lumber mill there, and he decided that he was going to lance Bobby D.'s ears and drain the infection, but somehow in the process of lancing Bobby D.'s ears he managed to severely damage both ears and left Bobby D. deaf.

And from that time on for whatever reasons, psychosomatic or whatever, Bobby D. lost his ability to perform as an athlete. I suppose it's possible that the inner ear might have been damaged in a way that upset his equilibrium, so that he had a real physical handicap that made it impossible to perform, but I rather think it was probably mostly the shock of being deaf at that age. He became more and more depressed and his depression deepened in a very short time to the point that he finally ran away from home and went to work in the Ford Motor Company, up north on the assembly line. This is fifty years ago.

He left the family and ran away, and while he was working in the Ford Motor Company he started to drink heavily and in a very short period of time, in just about two years, he became a total derelict alcoholic and couldn't function at all. He was living under newspapers. sleeping in flop houses and was totally incapacitated. And no matter what his family would try to do for him-they would try to encourage him to go to school and they would offer to pay for his education and try to rehabilitate him, to help him with his alcohol problem, and they would beg him to come back home down in south Mississippi and let them take care of him and try to get him on his feet—no matter what, he would just completely refuse to have anything to do with anybody in the family.

When he would go on binges and disappear, his father would send detectives to look for him to try to find him, but more often than not they couldn't. His brothers would try to correspond with him and phone him and he wouldn't answer and he was the source of great anxiety to his father and all of his brothers and sisters and particularly his mother who was growing very old and very sick. She had had her children over a period of 28 years, I think, and this had taken its toll-she was just exhausted and would beg her son Bobby D. to come back, try to plead with him to come back and be with her or at least visit her in her last years and Bobby D. would just refuse to communicate. He apparently blamed the entire family for his condition and resented them all. He was very bitter.

HE WAS DRUNK WHEN HE ARRIVED

So anyway, the entire family had just about given up on having any sort of relationship with Bobby D.—I mean they still called him and tried to look after him—but they were just too exhausted to try to help him.

So there was going to be a reunion the whole family was getting together with all the brothers and sisters and children and there was to be a large meal. It was either Easter or Thanksgiving-the climate I think is about the same for both those holidays in that part of the country. And all the brothers and sisters and children, like I say, had gotten together. It was really about seeing the mother as a group, probably for the last time because it appeared that she was dying. And of course they had tried to get in touch with Bobby D.—they asked him to come but he hadn't responded and nobody knew if he had even received any of the mail.

So the principal day of the holiday, Easter Sunday, I guess, everybody was in the house and the men were having a lot to drink in the middle of the

day, which was sort of typical for that sort of gathering, and Bobby D. just appeared. He looked awful; he was a wreck physically but everyone was so glad to see him that that went unnoticed really. He was drunk when he arrived and he came into the living room where all the family was gathered. It was a large, sort of elegant room in this big antebellum home down there. And Bobby D. just sat in the middle of the room, pulled up a chair and just sat and turned off his hearing aids. He wouldn't respond to any sort of conversation and he was making everybody very anxious and uncomfortable by just sitting there.

Some of the men were starting to get a little tight before the dinner—the noon meal, which was the big meal, was going to be served about four o'clock—and they'd had a few drinks and every now and then one of them would say something to Bobby D., who would just ignore it. So everybody was becoming very tense and, even though a child, I could tell—I was only about four or five years old—but even I could tell that there was something definitely wrong and there was a great deal of tension in the room and that it was coming from Bobby D.

But all of us kids were playing and we'd already been fed our big meal; they'd fed us about noon. So we'd finished our meal and we were all playing around the house. I remember one of my cousins had made a tent by putting a bed sheet over a card table in the sun parlor, which was a room not being used by the adults. We were crawling in and out from under this tent and playing whatever fantasy our game was about-I don't know what our game was-but we were sort of keeping an eye on Bobby D. all this time, being a little curious about why he was making everybody so uncomfortable.

Finally the mother called everybody in to this large meal, and all the adults were seated at this table and, like I say, the men were getting a little tight, and the women were a little bit fussy because the men were becoming sort of rowdy and talking loud. The women were being fussy and sort of bitchy and pick-

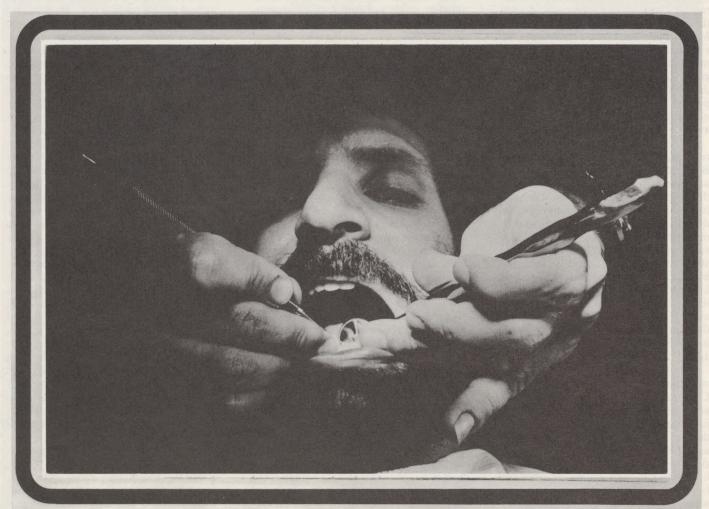


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Alan M. Kriegsman The Washington Post



EPSTEIN

Courtesy Gallery Rebecca Cooper

CAN DOCTORS RESTORE HIS VOICE? WILL HE EVER SING AGAIN?



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975

ing back, you know sort of trying to maintain an equal position in the space of the room, and the mother had called everybody in to eat and they were all sitting around the table and the kids were playing and running in and out of the rooms and slamming doors and making a lot of racket as kids do. But it was still a pretty festive meal.

Bobby D. had refused to come in to the meal. His mother'd say, "Bobby D., please come and join us for dinner," and Bobby D. would pretend not to hear and would just walk off and refuse to come in and one or two of the brothers were saying, "Goddam Bobby D., why don't you behave and try to make this occasion pleasant." Bobby D. would ignore this and walk off.

BOBBY D. TURNED OFF

So they were about two-thirds of the way through the meal when Bobby D. appeared. He came in through the back porch and walked into the dining room where there was this enormous table and all these adults were seated around it, and Bobby D. walked up behind Grandmother who was seated at the head of the table, and he said, "I want you all to get up and come out in the backyard." He had sort of a funny accent

because his loss of hearing had distorted his speech a little bit; he couldn't hear himself. So he had this very strange accent and it always occurred to me that he sounded a bit like the way sailors seem to sound. I don't know why but his accent was very distinctive in with all these heavy southern accents at the table. And he almost shouted, "I want you all to come out in the backyard."

My grandmother turned around and said, "Bobby D., please sit down. We're having dinner. Why don't you sit down with us and have some dinner." And he said, "No, I want you all to get up right now and come out in the backyard."

One of the brothers said, "Goddam Bobby D., sit down and shut up." He said, "You're just making a nuisance out of everything, out of yourself, and ruining everything. Sit down." Bobby D. didn't pay any attention. He said, "No, I want you to come out right now." And he was getting pretty agitated. And my grandmother was saying, "No." and she was sort of fanning herself and saying, "Please sit down," and was trying to touch Bobby D.'s arm, and he would pull away. And everybody was staring by now, you know, looking down the table at Bobby D. The children, myself and a number of the others, had sort of gathered around behind Bobby D. so we could hear what was going on. We were sort of standing there hushed, waiting to see what was going to happen. Bobby D. started to shout and insist that everybody come out in the backyard. So finally my grandmother said, "Well, O.K., everybody. We want to go out and see what it is that Bobby D. wants us to see."

So Grandmother, being the matriarch of the family, asked that everybody get up and leave their plates and go outside, and there was some grumbling and people were saying how ridiculous this is and what not, and some of the men were still pretty high. So there was some complaining, but everybody, in order to respect their mother's wishes, agreed to get up. They all got up and started filing out from the dining room through the back sitting room out onto the back porch. Bobby D. was leading the way, my grandmother next, and then this whole group of adults-more or less twenty adults-and all their children were filing out onto this large back porch.

HE BURIED THE CHICKENS

In the backyard there was a garden, a flower garden, and then alongside it, just at the end of the porch, was a hedge about four or five feet tall, and at my age—I was about four years old—it was much over my head. The hedge followed the drive coming in from the front of the house, continued under the portico shade, then went all the way back to what was called the lot, where they kept the domestic animals-chickens and cows and what not-and the barn was back there, with the horses. This driveway ran sort of in a curve back to the lot, and alongside the drive was this tall hedge row, which hid the drive from us on the back porch.

As our group began to walk around the hedge, I heard my grandmother gasp and saw her sort of hold on to one of the women. She was fanning herself with a handkerchief, this little white lacy handkerchief. She was a very elegant woman, still; even in her condition she was a very elegant woman. And she was fanning herself and she gasped and then the entire family sort of swept around the hedge and everybody was standing there stunned and I looked more or less between the legs of everybody. I looked down the driveway and saw that Bobby D. had buried there about a dozen baby chickens, called biddies-little yellow fluffy chickens—he had buried these chickens about eighteen inches apart down this curvilinear driveway, right down the middle of it, each one up to its

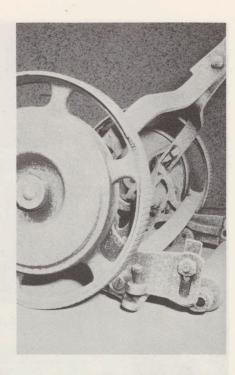
The drive was made of a sort of sandy pea gravel, this little fine gravel and sand. So the chickens were in all these little mounds, buried about eighteen inches apart, making a curvilinear line, their heads sticking up, turning from side to side, and they were going "peep, peep, peep," and it was a very strange sight. My grandmother said, "Bobby D., what is this?" She said, "What have you done this for?" And one or two of the brothers were saying, "What the hell is going on?" and swearing. And the women were speaking to one another sort of hysterically and the children were running around.

And with that, Bobby D. reached up under the house and pulled out one of these old-fashioned lawnmowers. And before anybody realized what was going on, Bobby D. ran as fast as he could with the lawnmower right down the row of chickens and just chopped off each biddy's head as he ran. The women were screaming and shouting and the children were running and the men were sort of staggering and swearing at Bobby D. and trying to catch him before he could

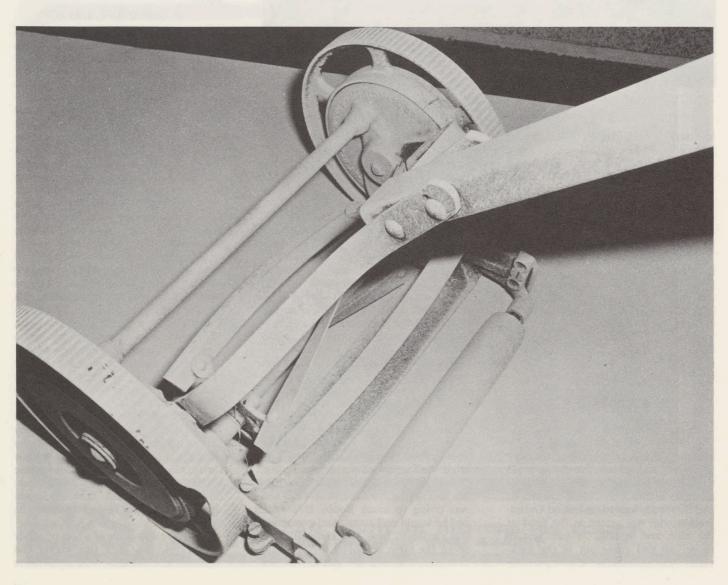
could kill all these baby chickens. And my grandmother had sort of semi-collapsed; she was about to faint. I was sort of looking between Bobby D.'s legs as he went charging down this driveway. The dust was flying and the chicken feathers, and the blood from the chickens' heads was flying.

Bobby D. just went right down all twelve chickens and never stopped. He just dropped the mower and there were a couple of brothers chasing him and he kept right on running and ran out through the lot down past the barn and right off into the woods. And never came back. He just vanished again. Eventually they found him back in Detroit and he was still drunk and he was a derelict and was refusing any help from the family or anyone else.

Finally when Bobby D. was very old, he moved back to south Mississippi and bought himself a little house down by this creek, sort of in a swamp. And he spent his last years fishing.



Details, "Chicken Tableau," 1975



KENNY DUFF

CONFRONTS

TONY GOMEZ

IN PUERTO RICO

Kenny Duff and a bunch of us went down to San Juan one Christmas, during the holidays. We had a little business down there-and Kenny had never been to San Juan and he was really looking forward to it. So we got down there and there were two or three nights of parties. This one man who was living there in Puerto Rico-this man who'd been Cuban but left after Fidel took over and was living in San Juan was showing us a good time and entertaining everybody and we'd had a very spectacular two or three days. It was getting time to go back and Kenny decided that he owed himself one more night on the town before going in.

Kenny's wife was really tired and said that she was ready to go home; when the first car was going back she wanted to go back to the hotel and sleep because we had to take a flight out about nine o'clock the next morning. Kenny declared that he would take her home, but he was going back down to old San Juan and hit some of the joints because he wasn't tired at all, and he thought he'd just like to go out and have a little more to drink.

His wife didn't like the idea too much—she kept trying to get him to come on back and go to bed and go to sleep and everything. But he had had just enough that he was feeling real frisky and was wide awake. So he took her on back to the hotel and she went to bed, and Kenny took a taxi back down to old San Juan.

He was walking along in old San Juan and there were a good many people still on the street because it was only about one o'clock in the morning. He came to this one bar which was one of these little ol' bitty bars—it was just about the size of a living room, and right on the street so that when you stood up to the bar

you could just take a couple of steps backwards and you'd be out in the street. There was just enough room to get under the roof to stand at the bar.

THIS BLOND WOMAN ... WAS GETTING PRETTIER AND PRETTIER BY THE MINUTE

There was, oh, maybe a half-a-dozen men there and there was one blond woman sitting at a table—they only had two tables in this thing. She was sitting at a table and Kenny said he noticed when he got in there that the bar was all decorated with photographs of prize fights and cock fights and horses and stuff. It was trying to be a sportsman's bar, strictly a men's bar, you know. And this blond woman, at that hour of the morning, was getting prettier and prettier by the minute. Kenny observed that when one of the guys standing at the bar went over and put a dime in the juke box, he'd go over and ask the woman if she'd dance, and she'd get up and dance with him, and then the guy would take her back to her seat and then the next guy at the bar would go over and put a dime in the juke box and dance with the woman, and he'd take her back, and then the next guy, and so

So after he'd been there about twenty minutes or half an hour, it had sort of worked itself down to him (he was on the end of the bar furthest away from the woman), and everybody had gone over and put a dime in the box and danced with this woman and he thought, well, it was his turn. And he went over and put a dime in the juke box and played a song he knew, and he walked over and asked the woman in English if she would dance with him. From the way she spoke back in English

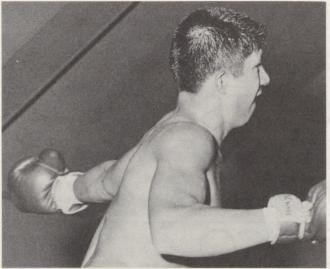
and said she would, he knew she wasn't Puerto Rican.

So they got up and danced. And he was really flying along pretty good—he had had a good bit to drink. It was getting late—it was two o'clock maybe by this time, something like that. So when he finished dancing with the lady, since he was at the end of the bar, it seemed reasonable to him that he'd just put another dime in the juke box and start the line back the other way. So instead of taking her to sit down he asked her to walk over and select another record. And she did and he put a dime in, and they played another record and they started to dance again.

And about that time this great big man that was in the bar there, that had been just sort of walking in and out and not really paying much attention, and talking to the bartender every now and then in Spanish, which Kenny didn't understand—all the men in there were speaking Spanish—this great big fella came over and stopped them from dancing and said, "Hey, man, you sit down."

And Kenny said, "No, I'm not going to sit down, I'm dancing with this woman." And the girl just sort of stepped back. And this was a great big fella—he stood at least six feet or more tall. Kenny is short but he's a very powerful man, he's very strong, and, like I say he had gotten just enough alcohol in him that he had a lot more fight in him than he was probably capable of at the time. So, he just stood by the woman there and he said to this big fella who looked very Puerto Rican, "No, I'm dancing with this lady and I'm not going to sit down, leave me alone."

And with that, the guy just reached down and grabbed Kenny around the arms in a bear hug. And he picked him



Golden Gloves Match, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, 1959





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up-you know just sort of leaned back and got his feet up off the floor to where Kenny couldn't move his arms and his feet weren't touching the floor, they were just dangling, and the man just took a couple of steps and had him outside on the street and set him down on the street there, sort of roughly. Everybody in the bar was all turned around watching.

TWO FISTS THE SIZE OF MILK CARTONS

The man held up these two fists that were the size of milk cartons, Kenny said-those half-gallon milk cartons. Said it was the biggest hands he ever saw in his life. And the man said, "Do you see these hands? Now I could kill you with these hands." And Kenny, who's a pretty cocky, feisty guy anyway when somebody gives him a good excuse, said, "Well, I don't know about that."

And with that, this big fella said, with a thick accent, but he was speaking English, "Do you know what my name is?" And Kenny said, "No." And the big fella said, "Well my name is Tony Gomez." And Kenny didn't hesitate, he said, "Well my name is Kenny Du. . . OHHHHHH! Mr. Gomez." And he said he sort of was trying to take a step

back. He said, "Oh, Mr. Gomez! Now I remember seeing you fight on television out of Los Angeles. You used to fight all those Mexican fellows around Los Angeles.'

And Tony Gomez said, "That's right."

And Kenny said, "OH, Mr. Gomez, I'm sorry." He started trying to apologize. He said, "I don't want any trouble," and he was trying to take a step back, but he was so shocked he couldn't move. He recognized this guy now-sure enough, he had seen him fighting on television when they used to run a lot of local fights from Los Angeles. They used to have like a Saturday afternoon fight card that you got in Mississippi. He had seen Tony Gomez fighting, and Gomez was a very good light heavyweight, in fact, was a contender at one point or another in his career.

DEEP SOBS CAME UP FROM HIS CHEST

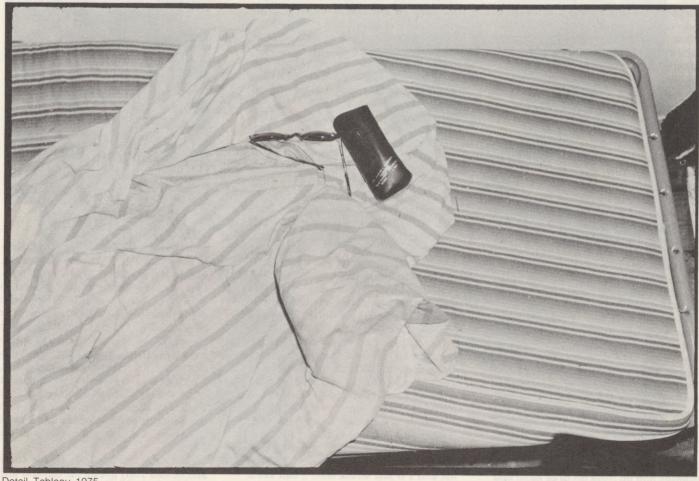
Drunk as he was. Kenny was still aware that this guy was really dangerous. And the man looked mad. He'd already picked him up and almost thrown him outside, and now Gomez reached out and grabbed him by both

shoulders and he thought, "OH, this is the end I guess. This guy's going to squash me like a bug."

And he said then Tony just put his head down on his shoulder and started sobbing like a baby. He said that Tony just racked deep sobs coming up from his chest. And Gomez said, "I don't want to hurt you, don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you. They just wanted me to scare you." And all the guys in the bar were laughing. Kenny said he had his hands on Tony's back by this time. He was hugging him, and this guy was just sobbing on his shoulders. Finally, Tony stood back, and said, "I didn't think you'd know who I was," and he was crying.

Kenny said, "Well yeah, I saw you fight a lot, and I really, I really liked you." Then Tony Gomez said, "Well why don't we go back in the bar and I'll buy you a drink?" And Kenny said. "All right." So they went back in the bar and the other four or five guys there in the bar just sort of made room for them, and the bartender came over with this big smile, like they'd played this great joke on the tourist. And the blond girl had disappeared.

Tony had his arm around Kenny's shoulder and they were the greatest bud-



Detail, Tableau, 1975

dies in the world now. So they ordered something to drink. They were sitting there having something to drink and it was getting on pretty late. Kenny's adrenalin was just beginning to balance again-he was still very nervous and everything—so he started putting them down pretty fast. And they started talking about boxing. Kenny had been a Golden Glover in his day and he had watched these fights pretty carefully and he knew a lot of the people that were fighting from those clubs out on the West Coast. So they had a lot to talk about, and they got really into it. Time was slipping by and before Kenny knew it, it was about five o'clock in the morning. This place stayed open all night and all day.

VISIONS OF SAVING TONY'S SOUL

As they had been talking, the story had come out that Tony, who was only about 23 at the time-when he was a fighter he had been about 19 or 20 years old—was all washed up. He was a hasbeen. He was very overweight and hadn't worked out in three or four years, and in fact was a junkie pimp there in San Juan. This blond gal was on his string, I guess. And it was the first time that anybody had paid any attention to him as an athlete since he had come back to San Juan, because everybody thought he was just sort of a bad, ornery junkie pimp. So in the course of the conversation, Kenny started to have a real drunken but genuine affection for Tony and became, in a very drunken but in a very sincere way, concerned about his future and what was going to happen to him if he stayed in San Juan and continued to abuse his body and deteriorate.

The emotional changes that he had gone through—the shock of thinking at one moment he was going to be squashed and the next moment finding this tragic sort of figure draped over his shoulder—had really had an effect on him by this time. And of course the hour, and the alcohol, was certainly taking its toll. He was feeling very emotional about the whole situation, and he decided that what he should do was take Tony back home with him for Christmas.

So he said, "Tony, I want you to come back with me and spend Christmas with me and my family." Tony was very wary. He thought Kenny was teasing him. And Kenny said that by this time he had gotten so emotionally involved in this sort of tragedy he was witnessing here, that he was sincere and wanted Tony to come back and stay over the holidays with him. And in fact, he said, at the time he had visions of saving Tony's soul, so to speak, and cleaning him up from his drug habit and



Detail, "Kenny Duff Portrait," 1975

rehabilitating him and helping this man get back on his feet.

So Kenny said he was serious, that he really wanted Tony to come with him. And in fact there was a pay phone there and he said, "I'm going to call and make you a reservation right now if you'll come." They were both drunk and Tony said, "Well, hell, sure I'll come." So Kenny went over and he eventually got the airline he needed, and he made a reservation for him on their flight that morning.

It was getting on to be daylight by this time—broad daylight almost—the sun had been up for half an hour or more maybe. It was about five or five-thirty in the morning. Kenny said, "Now listen, my wife's at the hotel. We've got to go back there and get my things. I'm not going to call my wife. We'll just take a taxi and go back and get packed up and catch this plane."

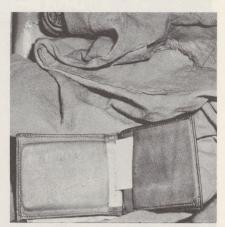
Tony said, "Well, O.K." So they walked over to the square where all the taxis were and they got a taxi and told the driver where they wanted to go. It was a pretty long drive back to the hotel and in the taxi Tony confessed to Duff that he had thought that he was gay and was trying to pick him up. And Duff said no. Tony was convinced by this time that Kenny wasn't trying to pick him up, that he wasn't trying to seduce him. Tony's reasoning was then that if Kenny didn't want him to go to bed with him, the only other use he could possibly have for somebody like himself was to take him back to the States to beat somebody up.

So they got into this incredible conversation. Duff said they were riding along there in the back of this cab and Tony turned around and said, "Well, when we get there you just tell me who it is and I'll wreck him." And Duff said, "What do you mean?" And Tony said, "Well, you don't have to tell me now, but when we get back, whoever it is that's giving you trouble, you just tell me and I'll just wreck him. I can kill a

man with these hands." And Kenny said, "No, listen man, I don't want you to wreck anybody, I want you to go back and just have a nice Christmas with me and my family, and have some turkey and enjoy life and just take it easy for a few days." And Tony would still just laugh and say, "Well, when we get there you just tell me who it is and I'll wreck him." Kenny kept trying to persuade him that he wasn't interested in him beating anybody up. But Tony couldn't imagine that.

So they got to the hotel and got out of the taxi and by this time it was about seven o'clock in the morning. Kenny said they got out and finished the drinks they brought with them and they talked about nonsense in the hotel there for a few minutes and decided to go on up to the room. It was time to wake up Kenny's wife. She'd need a little time to get cleaned up and have some breakfast and everything before they got on the plane around nine.

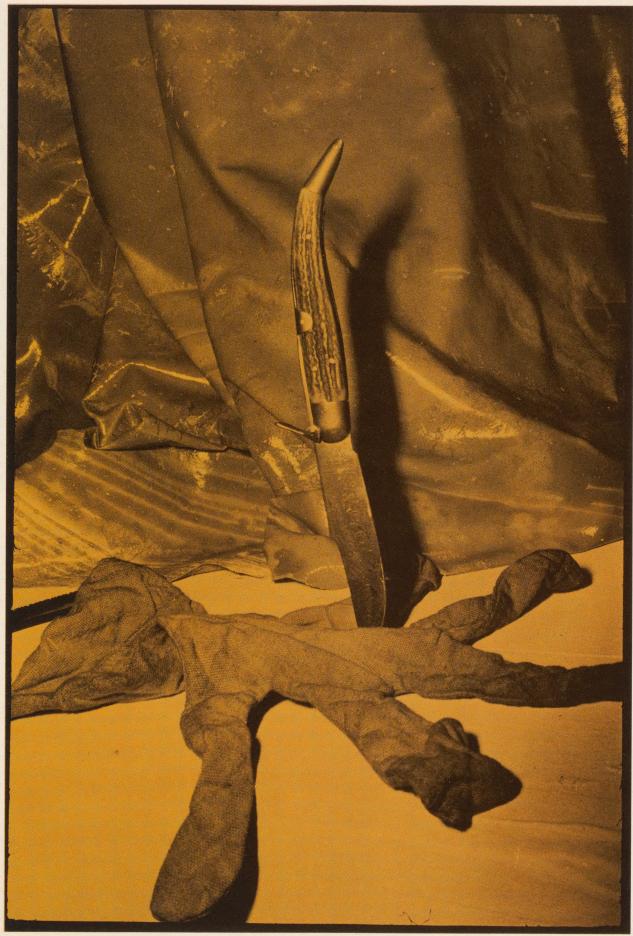
So they went upstairs and Kenny had a key and he let himself in and Tony came in behind him. They must've looked a mess. Kenny said when he let himself in, his wife was sitting up in the bed and when she saw them come in she just started screaming and pulled the covers up over her head. She just stayed



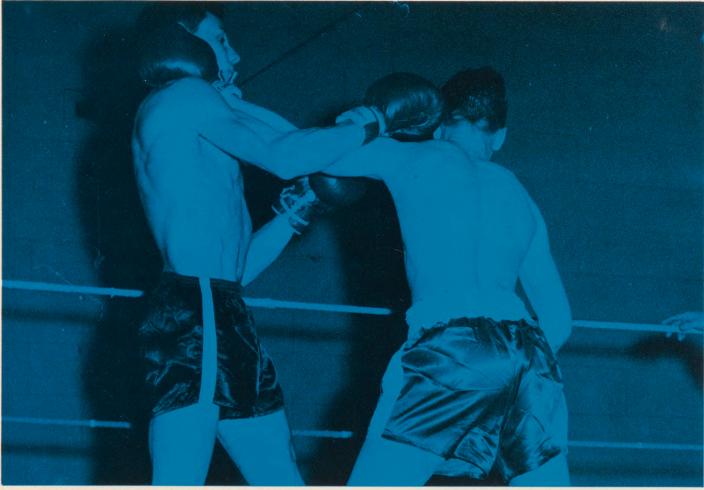
Detail, "Kenny Duff Portrait," 1975

under there screaming—hysterical. Kenny kept saying, "What's the matter, what's the matter?" She wouldn't answer him. So Kenny turned around to Tony, but Tony was in the bathroom doing something—he didn't know what he was doing in there. And Kenny even suspected, he said later, that he might have been fixing himself up. But Tony came out in a minute and Kenny said, "Well, look, we better wait outside while she gets her things together." It was a real scene there in the room with her hollering and everything and it must have been waking up everybody in the hotel.

So Kenny left his wife in the room and he and Tony got on the elevator and



Detail, "Kenny Duff Portrait," 1975



Golden Gloves Match, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, 1959

went downstairs. Kenny said they both looked such a mess and they'd made so much noise upstairs, he was afraid to leave Tony in the lobby because it might not look right and they might have some trouble. So they went outside and Kenny decided he'd take him out to the beach.

The beach was fenced off from the hotel, and the only way you could get there from where they were without going back through the lobby—where they'd made such a scene—was to walk down to the next hotel—which happened to be the Holiday Inn—and go through their lobby.

"GOD ALMIGHTY HE'S GOING TO KILL THIS GUY"

They walked down half a block and they went in the lobby of this Holiday Inn, trying to get on the beach. About that time, Tony, who was really behaving very strangely and was very strung out, obviously, turned to Kenny and sort of grabbed him by his arm and said, "You want to see me wreck him? I'll show you I can wreck him."

There was a little bitty Puerto Rican guy, Kenny said, he couldn't have been hardly more than five feet tall, standing in this booth in the lobby. The booth was just this little box about four feet square with a fake palm tree roof on it and a counter all the way around. This guy made reservations there for the tourists, you know, like the tour buses and boat rides and that sort of stuff. That was his job. So Tony walked over and started trying to climb over in that little box with this guy and was going to beat him up. And Kenny thought, "God almighty he's going to kill this guy."

So Kenny grabbed Tony by one arm and about that time a manager or one of the desk clerks or whatever came over, because Tony had gotten really loud. He started hollering and everything, and people knew something was going to happen. This other guy, who had come over and started trying to hold on to Tony's other arm, was just making him madder and madder. He almost knocked the whole booth over, and the little guy inside was just about to cry. He thought it was going to be the end for him. But they finally got Tony off and Kenny persuaded him that he didn't want to see him wreck the man. So Tony finally backed off, but it was pretty apparent that he wasn't satisfied, that he wanted to hurt somebody.

Kenny apologized to the desk clerk

and walked Tony right on through the lobby, past these people having breakfast, and out on to the beach. They walked along the beach a little way and there was an umbrella and a bench and some other things. Kenny said, "Tony, you just sit right here and don't say anything and don't move and just be calm and I'll go get my wife and get the luggage and we'll go on out to the airport." Tony was sort of having a little sinking spell about that time. He was happy to sit down and be calm, and so he said, "O.K."

Kenny left him and ran over to his hotel and got upstairs and, by that time, his wife had gotten up and was about half dressed and seemed much calmer. He explained to her as best he could in about five minutes what was happening and what he wanted to do. He was sober by this time—he had been shocked into sobering up. But he looked awful and smelled worse. His wife was just about to get hysterical again. She said, "You can't bring him home. I'm not going to have you bringing this junkie pimp home for Christmas with my kids." Kenny said it was something he had to do, that it was really important, that Tony was a human being, that it was the

spirit of Christmas, and on and on. He finally persuaded his wife that it would be o.k., and told her that he'd already made the reservation and what not. So she said o.k.

By this time they had all the luggage packed and they went downstairs and had a taxi called. They got in the cab and drove over to the Holiday Inn, and Kenny's wife steeled herself for the next appearance of this man. Kenny got out of the cab and went out through the lobby and out on the beach to find Tony.

And there was no Tony. He ran up the beach for fifty yards or so and he couldn't see him anywhere, and he came back and ran up the beach fifty yards the other way and he couldn't see him. He went back in the lobby and he asked where Tony was, and nobody'd seen him and nobody had anything to say about it.

SHE WASN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE HIS MIND

So he got back to the car and told his wife, "I'm going to take you to the airport and I want you to go back home, and I'm going to stay here and find Gomez." His wife said, "That's ridiculous — you can't do this — it's Christmas. You're supposed to be at home. You've had a good time and you've overdone it. Now let's get back home."

Kenny said, "No." Kenny has a very

masculine appearance and he's a very sort of rough on the surface. It's not at all like him to show his emotions. But he said he started to cry in the cab on the way to the airport. He told his wife, "You just don't understand what this means to me. It just means so much to me that I can't go back and just leave him here. It's just not a human thing to do. Now that I've met him and talked and we've had this entire experience together, I just have to find him and bring him home and see if I can't get him on his feet, get him some help."

His wife finally saw that she wasn't going to be able to change his mind. So she said, "Well O.K., I'll go ahead and get on the plane and go back with the rest of the party." She said, "I'll go back with the rest, but I'll expect you back at home in a couple of days and you call me and let me know when you're coming. Don't stay here more than 48 hours without letting me know exactly where you are and what you're doing." Kenny said he would certainly do that. And not to worry, that he'd be home by Christmas.

So he got to the airport and he didn't even go in because he didn't want to meet the rest of the crowd. He just let his wife off at the entrance, and took the same taxi right back down to old San Juan. He went back looking for this bar where he had met Tony, but he couldn't find it right away. By the time he finally did, it was the middle of the

day and he was feeling awful so he started to have another drink. The next thing you know there was this gal in the bar that sort of caught his eye. He was getting a little buzz on again because he hadn't really sobered up from the last night.

So he was talking to her and asking her if she knew Tony. She didn't, but she agreed that she'd help him look. Nobody at the bar seemed to know who this Tony was. Anyway, he and the gal ended up having a lot to drink and hitting all the joints and looking for Tony, and eventually ended up together that night.

And the next morning Kenny woke up and realized what must've happened. The people at the Holiday Inn must have called the cops and they came out there and picked up Tony. He started figuring that Tony might think that Kenny had called the cops himself in order not to have to take him home for Christmas. And that if he was in jail, when he got out, if Kenny was still hanging around, it would probably be a mess. He was lying there in the bed thinking all this, and he started getting really scared. He said he didn't even wake up the old gal he was with, he just sort of eased out from under the covers and slipped his pants on and got his shoes in his hand and went out the door and caught the next taxi back to the airport, and waited until he could get the next flight home.



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Catalog of the Exhibition



Detail, "Airplane Crash," 1975



Detail, "Kenny Duff Portrait," 1975



Detail, "The Dog's Room," 1975



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975

- 1. "Airplane Crash," 1975 airplane, air, mixed media (tableau) 18' x 26' x 26'
- 2. "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975 mixed media (tableau) 18' x 36' x 26'
- 3. "Kenny Duff Portrait," 1975 fabric, rubber, wood 7' x 6' x 6'
- 4. "Chicken Tableau," 1975 mounted chicken, spotlight, lawnmower 10' x 10' x 8'
- 5. "No Talking Dog," 1975 mounted dog, neon, canvas 10' x 15' x 10'
- 6. "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975 acrylic on canvas 7' x 9'
- 7. "The Dog's Room," 1975 acrylic on canvas
- 8. "Dog Mounting Chair," 1975 airbrush ink on paper 40" x 30" Lent by Peter and Bernis von zur Muehlen, Reston, Virginia
- 9. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 10. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 11. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 12. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 13. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 14. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 15. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 16. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 17. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"
- 18. Untitled drawing, 1975 airbrush ink on paper 30" x 40"



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975



Detail, "The Dog's Room," 1975

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Chronology

1938

William Edward McGowin, Jr., born June 2, Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Father, W.E. McGowin, Sr., is lawyer in Port St. Joe, Florida. Mother, nee Emily Little Ratliff, is Hattiesburg native. Father's family centered near Chapman, Alabama, where McGowin's grandfather was in lumber business.

McGowin is first child, will remain only child for eight years. (Sister Jolie Elizabeth born in 1946. Now Mrs. Robert Caldwell, Pensacola, Florida.)

1940 - 1947

McGowin's family moves to various locations in Alabama. While father is hospitalized for year at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, McGowin lives with paternal grandparents in Chapman.

Maternal grandfather, Albert Ratliff, is inventor and in local advertising business, Hattiesburg. Visiting periodically, McGowin watches him make small machines, paint signs, arrange displays.



1948

Family moves to Hattiesburg, where McGowin will remain for next 12 years. McGowin attends local public schools, entering Hattiesburg High School, fall 1953. While there, joins two fraternities and runs mile and half-mile on track team.

Has no definite career plans, beyond vague ambition to attend Naval Academy. Main interests during high school are drawing and modifying cars. Owns succession of second-hand cars, notably 1936 Chevrolet 4-door sedan and Ford Model A, each of which he reconditions and redesigns. Has said, "My notebooks were always full of auto drawings rather than homework. It was the first time I learned I could have a visual idea and then make things look the way I wanted."

1956

Graduates from high school in spring and attends Marion Institute, Alabama, for next school year (through June, 1957) to prepare for possible Annapolis appointment. Discovering little aptitude for engineering, enters Mississippi Southern College (now University of Southern Mississippi), Hattiesburg, fall 1957.



1957 - 1960

McGowin works way through college, at one point taking full-time job at local sand and gravel company. Works part-time in various drafting jobs, arranges window displays for Waldoff's Department Store.

Takes art courses, decides to make art his career. Receives encouragement from instructor Vernon Merriefield, who urges him to think of graduate work in painting. McGowin agrees, but sees for himself practical career in commercial art.

Becomes state boxing champion in lightweight (1957 - 1958) and welterweight (1959) divisions.

Marries childhood friend Mildred Patricia (Patsy) Sheffield, April 15, 1960.

Completes undergraduate work in December; enters graduate school University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

1961

McGowin remains at Alabama through summer session, 1961. Paints number of canvases in abstract expressionist style; "Champion" wins a first prize in "Annual Jury Exhibition," Birmingham Museum of Art, April.

In September, McGowin returns to Hattiesburg as art instructor at Mississippi Southern. Continues to paint prolifically and reads contemporary art periodicals.

Intrigued by Hans Hofmann's "push-pull" theory of making abstract shapes on a painting's surface appear to move forward or recede, McGowin attacks problem literally, by

inserting strips of acetate (flexible transparent plastic) in canvas, then painting shapes directly on both canvas and plastic. Where painted shapes cross plastic, color seems suspended in air, affecting perception of depth.

First child, Leah Sheffield McGowin, born December 28.

1962

McGowin is offered position in Washington, D.C. on staff of his congressman, Rep. William Colmer (D. - Miss.). Serves as "doorman," guarding entrance to floor of House of Representatives in Capitol.

Moves to Washington in April, bringing large number of completed canvases. Almost immediately visits Corcoran Gallery of Art and shows work to Assistant Director Gudmund Vigtel (now Director of the High Museum, Atlanta). Vigtel offers McGowin solo show for following season.

McGowin settles into job; Patsy McGowin and daughter arrive in Washington; family moves to Arlington, Virginia.



For rest of summer and fall, McGowin paints, expanding size of work and continuing experiments with problems of literal and perceived depth.

Visits studio of Washington Color Painter Howard Mehring.

Solo show at Corcoran Gallery opens December 18. Catalog issued, listing 22 paintings, mostly oil on canvas, including several with plastic inserts. McGowin meets Ramon Osuna (now co-director of Pyramid Galleries, Washington, D.C.), who visits his studio and introduces him to Henri (Henrietta Ehrsam), director of Henri Gallery in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.

McGowin joins stable of artists at Henri Gallery. Works begin to sell; Corcoran show is mentioned in Leslie Judd Ahlander's "Washington Notes," Art International, March [Bib. no. 6].

In May receives one-year teaching assistantship at University of Alabama. Returns with family to Alabama at end of summer to complete work for master's degree. Studies with Melville Price (former studio partner of Franz Kline) and Theodore Klitzke, Chairman of Art Department (now Dean of Maryland Institute of Art).

Writes Henri, "I've freed the paintings from several old habits." Begins to move away from straightforward abstract expressionism, building on increased use of three-dimensionality. Starts to work in plexiglass, making folded painted boxes.

1964

Second daughter, Jill Elizabeth McGowin, born February 1.

McGowin continues painting, prepares for solo show at Henri Gallery in March. Work now, in some instances, is moving off the wall. Some works have projections that cast shadows on painted surface, some are free-standing sculpture/painting combinations. Work is gestural and organic in form.

During spring term at Alabama, attends Theodore Klitzke's art history seminar. Klitzke encourages McGowin. "He made me dig for what I was about," McGowin comments, "and I had to think about that in verbal and logical terms, for the first time." McGowin writes seminar paper on importance of drawing as uninhibited artistic gesture and most direct indicator of artist's intent [see Bib. no. 38].

McGowin begins to formulate ideas on necessity of continual change in his art. In April 1 letter to Henri, he says in part:

... [In my art, I'll be] changing constantly, never repeating anything no matter how much I like it. I don't want my art to have a look about it — it will because I make it — but I don't want to be put in any school or group. It is too confining - I want to be able to do anything I damn please - which is the only way — ... This is very important to me. I don't want a label unless the label is change. I change every day, every hour, every second. Why shouldn't my art change, and the more the better ... My art will mature as I mature, not because I swallow and spit it up a million times, but because I mature as an artist ...

In March, McGowin devises Happening at Alabama, together with fellow students Harold Bright, Robert Williams, and with participation of Melville Price [see Bib. no. 31]. Event features stripper, German giant on roller skates, film on soil conservation, electronic music, bridge game, paint fight, and grits served in punch cups.

Later that spring, McGowin paints old condemned house on campus, covering not only interior and exterior in bright colors, but also surrounding lawn and nearby tree. Calls it work of art you can walk through.



With Harold Bright, McGowin plans to open art school in Washington after graduation from Alabama. Wants school to be center for area artists, like New York's Art Students League, including music and theater, as well.

Master of Arts degree in painting awarded by University of Alabama, May.

McGowin and Bright arrive in Washington mid-July, obtain loan for school from Small Business Administration [Bib. no. 36], and locate in Old Town Alexandria. McGowin family rents house nearby.

McGowin-Bright School opens in September, offers initial 40 students classes in drawing, painting, sculpture and ceramics.

1965

McGowin commissioned to paint large mural for Citizens for Johnson-Humphrey reception on Inauguration Day. Paints overlapping profiles of men, surrounds work with neon [Bib. no. 37].

In early spring, Bright returns to Alabama. McGowin carries on school with other instructors.

Begins experiments with vacuum-forming plastic. Wants a rigid transparent material that can be colored, molded and formed with ease. Uses Uvex, commercial plastic, constructing dark-colored rectangular objects with large round bubbles and dimples. Some are free-standing, others are "framed" in aluminum and hung on wall.



Moves away from gesturalism of early paintings: "I really think of them [the new pieces] as objects, and want others to look at them that way, too, for their esthetic qualities, not for any emotional connotations" [quoted in Bib. no. 45].

In October, participates in demolition party by helping paint interior of Georgetown house slated for wrecking. Guests later smash walls, ceilings, floors covered with painted figures, abstract designs [Bib. no. 39].

1966

McGowin closes school in January. Takes on commercial art jobs, begins to teach Saturday classes at Corcoran School of Art.

Continues to make vacuum-formed pieces. Surprised to find similar technique illustrated on *Art in America* cover of Craig Kauffman vacuum-formed plastic work (vol. 54, no. 4, July - August, 1966).

McGowin continues to become acquainted with Washington artists, meeting, among others, Gene Davis, Paul Reed and Tom Downing, and becomes close to Sam Gilliam (also a Mississippi native) and Rockne Krebs.

Whitney Museum of American Art selects small McGowin vacuum-formed plastic work "Los" for 1966 Sculpture Annual Exhibition. Work of Rockne Krebs also chosen.

1967

Whitney Museum's William Agee asks McGowin to show him other work. McGowin brings sculptures to New York's Chelsea Hotel, invites Whitney Museum staff and gallery people to view work there.

Whitney Museum purchases "Mand." Martha Jackson Gallery buys six sculptures; McGowin joins Jackson stable.

Works exhibited in Whitney "Recent Acquisitions" exhibition, May - June, and in Martha Jackson "Young Artists" show, June.

McGowin makes larger and more colorful pieces. Wall sculpture "Bullets" shown in July at Henri Gallery's opening show at new (and present) P-Street Washington location.

Fall semester, appointed full-time instructor of sculpture at Corcoran School of Art. Asked to develop "New Media" course, emphasizing new materials and techniques in sculpture [see Bib. no. 41].

In November, McGowin holds solo show at Henri. Variety of shapes, sizes and colors in plastic, ranging from horizontal "Pool" to free-standing "Red Column," including both symmetrical and new free-form "organic" works.

Receives award from National Endowment for the Arts, November 17.

Meets attorney Don Brown, who offers to exchange basement studio space in large apartment building for art.

1968

Develops "Pie Shapes," ribbed, quarter-circle, modular wall sculptures in two sizes, spraypainted in variously-colored all-over polka-dot patterns. These works exhibited in solo show at Martha Jackson Gallery, May - June.



Participates in September exhibition "Art in Washington, 1969" at Washington Gallery of Modern Art.

Extensive article by Douglas Davis on McGowin career, "Getting a Start in the Art World," appears in *The National Observer*, November [Bib. no. 45].

Large two-part plastic work "Squinches," fitting into floor and ceiling corners of room, selected for Whitney Museum 1968 Sculpture Annual Exhibition.

1969

McGowin extends exploration of perceptual ambiguities of color suspended in transparent medium. Beginning with "Pie Shapes," continuing with "Domes," "T.V. Pieces," "Curtains," and especially "Modigar," McGowin applies dot-grid patterns of color to clear plastic, making color seem to float in space independent of transparent structural body of work.

During spring, McGowin works on "GiveAway" event, embodiment of long-held conviction that art must undergo continual change and that "schools" of art or well-defined "movements" no longer are important.

Deciding to mark the end of a tradition that started with Cezanne and culminated with Color Painting, McGowin devises idea of giving away 50 exact copies of Gene Davis stripe painting. Obtains Gene Davis' approval, and Douglas Davis, art critic of *The National Observer* (now art critic of *Newsweek*), agrees to help stage event, while McGowin supervises crew of artists in making 50 copies of Gene Davis 1969 painting "Popsicle."

"GiveAway" held on May 22 in main ballroom of Mayflower Hotel. 500 invited guests draw numbers to win copies of painting; McGowin, Douglas Davis and Gene Davis preside.

McGowin constructs tableau of head-on auto crash for color cover illustration of article on car accidents in *The Washington Star* "Sunday" magazine, August [Bib. no. 49]. Anticipates 1975 "Auto Wreck" environment at Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston.

During summer, continues preparations for three-person show "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin" organized by Walter Hopps at Corcoran Gallery (with Sam Gilliam and Rockne Krebs).

Show opens Corcoran fall season. McGowin

work includes wall sculpture "Children" (grouping of 10 "Pie Shapes" on two walls into corner of room), tableau "Curtains" (three ranks of dot-painted transparent vinyl sheets, lighted to give whirling "snowstorm" effect), "T.V. Pieces," and "Domes."

"Modigar," room-sized environment, marks beginning of major change for McGowin, combining organic lumpy plastic forms with straight-edged plexiglass sheets, all dot-painted and lighted to create murky color-filled atmosphere in room. Transforming appearance of entire exhibition space, piece no longer is simply "object as object" McGowin has been making since 1965.

On November 1, McGowin presides at mock divorce ceremony of two artist friends, Ken and Margot Wade, held at Lincoln Memorial [Bib. no. 52].

January. In catalog statement, McGowin calls this the first work in long time "... that arises from a specific memory ... (and) ... tries to recreate a specific emotional feeling in me."

Large plastic wall sculpture "Children" purchased by Friends of the Corcoran Gallery in May [Bib. no. 62].

McGowin serves as artist-in-residence at University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, for sixweek summer session, starting mid-June. In July, travels to University of the New World in Valais, Switzerland, stays as artist-in-residence for rest of summer.

1972

In January, awarded grant by Cassandra Foundation.

Holds two solo shows in March, showing airbrush drawings at Pyramid Galleries and, at

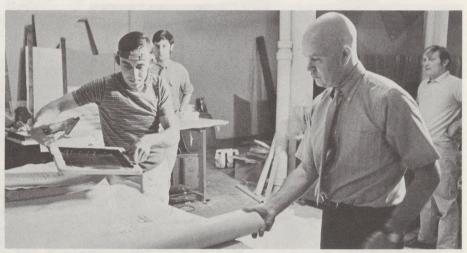


PHOTO: M. SUSAN MILLER

1970

"Three Washington Artists: Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," article on Corcoran show by Walter Hopps and Nina Felshin (Osnos), appears in *Art International*, May [Bib. no. 24].

McGowin continues experimentation with large environments, creating room-sized "Vectrafiber Piece" of painted netting and fluorescent lights for "Washington: Twenty Years," The Baltimore Museum of Art, May June.

Spends several months evaluating direction and progress of work, decides in early summer to begin "Name Change," lengthy and elaborate program designed as didactic demonstration of ideas on necessity for freedom to work diversely and inconsistently. Plans to change name legally once a month for a year, creating separate work of art for each name.

Process begins in fall, when McGowin changes name to Alva Isaiah Fost (with help of lawyer Ira Lowe) and shows "Erotic Snatches," participatory/environmental work with erotic film, at Protetch-Rivkin Gallery in Washington (with help of engineer/artist Fred Pitts).

1971

McGowin and Patsy McGowin are divorced.

"Mirror Tableau," large "Name Change" work, is exhibited at Corcoran Gallery, early

neighboring Henri Gallery, large environment of "Two Infinite Spaces," concave styrofoam hemispheres painted and lighted to confuse perceptions of depth.

"Name Change" process completed in March. During summer McGowin prepares solo show for Baltimore.

"Name Change" opens October 3 at The Baltimore Museum of Art. Twelve works are exhibited, ranging vastly in size, materials and media. Large tableaux "Dosssett," "American Sangra," and "Mirror Tableau" create own environments; smaller works "Door," "Clock," and "When Was My First Lasterday" present enigmas. "Dairy Queen" explodes frozen custard in cone, exists only in documentation. Other works are plastic sculpture "Lexan," videotape "Candelabra," hologram "7-1-78," and suite of prints with sculpture case "Fandove."

Film piece "Erotic Snatches" is censored by Museum; engraved bronze plaque noting absence of work is substituted. Censorship also extended to silk-screen print of erotic picture in "Door": offending portion of print is masked by black tape.

"Name Change," 40-page catalog with statement by the artist, is published.

Early December, McGowin travels to Appalachian State University, North Carolina, for one-week position as artist-in-residence. Constructs prototype of "Walled Room with

Mirrors," enclosed environment with contents visible only by distorted reflection. Larger, more finished version of work is built in Corcoran Gallery for one-month solo exhibition from mid-December.

1973

McGowin increasingly works in large impermanent environmental or tableau formats, with associational rather than strictly formal connotations. Also continues to produce conventional permanent objects, completing series of airbrush paintings and drawings as working studies or proposals for environments and tableaux.

Large environment "7-1-96" is constructed for May group show "The Art of Light and Power," continuing use of "future date" motif begun with hologram in "Name Change."

In fall, McGowin wins grant from American Center for Students and Artists in Paris, subsidizing studio there during 1974.

Solo exhibition of paintings and drawings opens at Pyramid Galleries in January. "Room for Leaving," third in series of walled rooms with mirrors, is acquired by The National Collection of Fine Arts, Washington.

McGowin leaves for one-year stay in Paris at end of month. Joins Galerie Darthea Speyer; begins to introduce abstracted dog figure into work.

Visits Tunisia in summer.

For November solo show "Bobby Joe Carrol Hattiesburg Mississippi" at American Cultural Center, he combines installation of large

tableau with performance, including live dog and himself (live and on audio- and video-tape). First use of explicit "story-telling" in McGowin's work, as he recites anecdotes and longer stories from his past.

McGowin returns to Washington in January. Resumes teaching at Corcoran School and begins preparations for September solo show at Corcoran Gallery.

Constructs large environment "Auto Wreck" for three-person show "Gulf Coast, East Coast, West Coast," opening mid-May at Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston. Two cars are shown in head-on crash, with various personal objects scattered around, giving clues of identities of people involved in wreck. Tape of McGowin stories about "Hoyt" is played continuously during exhibition.

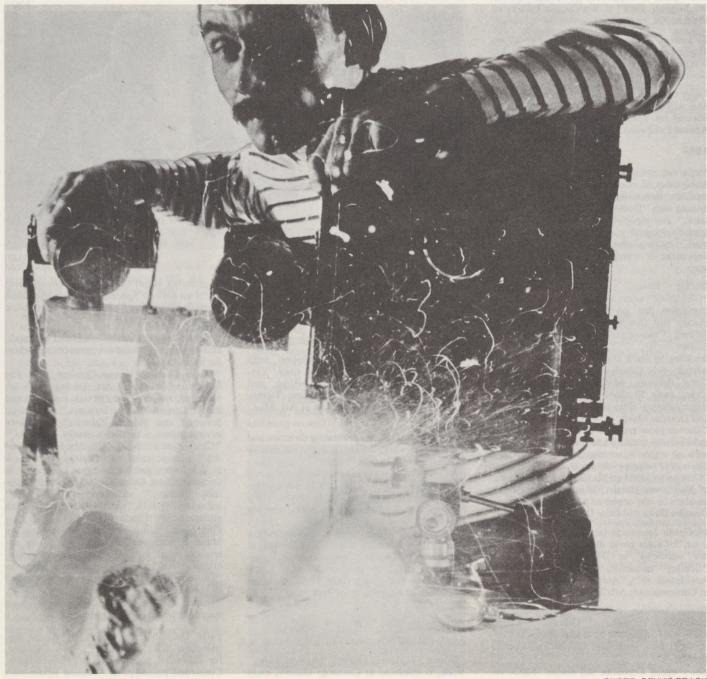


PHOTO: DENNIS BRACK



Opening party courtesy the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Co. and the American Sales Company.

List of Exhibitions

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1962

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. "Ed McGowin," December 18 - January 13, 1963. (No. 15 in Washington Artists Exhibition Series. Catalog. Abstract expressionist paintings, some with inserts of clear plastic. References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 2, 6, 32, 33, 45, 51, 76.)

1964

Henri Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia. "Exhibition by Ed McGowin," March 3 - April 4. (Expressionist paintings on canvas and plastic, some free-standing; several constructions and sculpture/paintings. References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 2, 34, 35, 45, 51.)

1967

Henri Gallery, Washington, D.C. "Exhibition of Forms," November 4 - 30. (Vacuum-formed and fabricated plastic sculptures. Included "Plastic Form," "Bullets," "Three Carrots" [illus. Bib. nos. 1, 10, 11]. Reviews: Bib. nos. 42, 43, 44.)

1968

Martha Jackson Gallery, New York. "Recent Sculpture," May 28 - June 22. (Vacuumformed and fabricated plastic sculptures. Included "Pie Shapes" and "Columns" [illus. Bib. nos. 17, 24]. References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 2, 14, 15, 16, 45.)

1969

Henri Gallery, Washington, D.C. "Ed McGowin," December 20 - January 15, 1970. (Vacuum-formed and fabricated plastic sculptures "T.V. Pieces." Review: Bib. no. 54.)

1970

Protetch-Rivkin Gallery, Washington, D.C. "Erotic Snatches," October 2 - 31. (Installation with film; participation piece. See "Name Change" catalog, The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1972. Reviews: Bib. nos. 25, 58, 59.)

1971

Galerie Simonne Stern, New Orleans. "Ed McGowin," January 11 - 30. (Vacuum-formed and fabricated plastic sculptures. Included "Domes," "T.V. Pieces." Review: Bib. no. 60.)

The Fine Arts Gallery, Frostburg State College, Maryland. "Exhibit of Three Large Works & Drawings," February 19 - March 6. (Poster. Included "Dossett," "Mirror Tableau," "American Sangra" [illus. in "Name Change" catalog]. Reference: Bib. no. 81.)

Fine Arts Galleries, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. "Ed McGowin," June 28 - July 16. (Included "Mirror Tableau." Review: Bib no. 63.)

1972

Pyramid Galleries, Washington, D.C. "Ed McGowin," March 3 - 25. (Airbrush drawings. Reviews: Bib. nos. 64, 65.)

Henri Gallery, Washington, D.C. "Two Infinite Spaces," March 4 - 25. (Two large environments, designed for exhibition. Reviews: Bib. nos. 64, 65.)

The Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland. "Name Change," October 3 - November 5. (40-page catalog with introduction by Renato Danese and statement by the artist; color illus. "Erotic Snatches," p. 13, "Dairy Queen," p. 17, "When Was My First Lasterday," p. 21,

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"Dossett," p. 25. Twelve works, some multipart, including environments, tableaux, plastic sculptures, suite of prints, hologram, videotape, others. See Chronology. References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 26, 28, 31, 58, 59, 63-71, 81, 83, 84.)

Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina. "Ed McGowin," December 7 - 8. (Large environment "Walled Room with Mirrors." Review: Bib. no. 72.)

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. "Ed McGowin: An Environment," December 15 - January 14, 1973. (Large environment "Walled Room with Mirrors." Reviews: Bib. nos. 27, 28, 73.)

1974

Pyramid Galleries, Washington, D.C. "Ed McGowin at Pyramid," January 8 - February 6. (Poster. Airbrush paintings and drawings: proposals for environments and tableaux; environment "Room for Leaving." References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 28, 29, 30, 74, 75, 76.)

American Cultural Center, Paris. "Bobby Joe Carrol Hattiesburg Mississippi," November 13 - 27. (Poster. Large installation and performance. See Livingston essay.)

1975

Galerie Simonne Stern, New Orleans. "Recent Works," April 26-May 22. (Airbrush "dog" paintings and drawings. Review: Bib. no. 78.)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1961

Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama. "53rd Annual Jury Exhibition," April 1 - 28. (Organized by Birmingham Art Association; juror: Fred Conway. Catalog [McG. work listed p. 7; ill. painting "Champion" p. 6]. McG. given one of five first-place awards.)

1964

The Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. "Nine Contemporary Painters: USA," May 21 - June 10. (Catalog with separately issued essay by Lawrence Alloway [McG. work listed p. 8; ill. painting "Nota" p. 8]; essay reprinted in *Americas*, vol. 16, no. 7, July 1964 [Bib. no. 7]. Among other artists included: Gene Davis, Tom Downing, Sam Gilliam, Lowell Nesbitt. Exhibition traveled to Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, 1964 - 1965.)

1966

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. "Annual Exhibition 1966 Contemporary Sculpture and Prints," December 16 - February 5, 1967. (Catalog [McG. work listed p. 11]. Included plastic sculpture "Los." Reference: Bib. nos. 2, 8, 45, 51.)

1967

American Greetings Gallery, Pan Am Building, New York. "Roots and Promise of American Art," January 10 - March 13. (Organized by The Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts. Catalog with essay by Bartlett H. Hayes, Jr. [McG. discussed p. 6; ill. plastic sculpture "Albion" p. 6].)

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. "Recent Acquisitions," May 17 - June 18. (Checklist [McG. work listed p. 2]. Included plastic sculpture "Mand." See Chronology.)

Martha Jackson Gallery, New York. "Young Artists, Their Work: A Show," June 3 - 23. (Checklist [McG. work listed p. 1]. Included plastic sculpture "Purple Knobbed Cube," other sculptures. References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 5, 9.)

Henri Gallery, Washington, D.C. "Opening Show," July 31 - August 31. (First exhibition of Henri Gallery in new Washington location. Included plastic sculpture "Bullets." References/Reviews: Bib. nos. 10, 40.)

1968

Des Moines Art Center, Iowa. "Painting: Out From The Wall," February 16 - March 10. (Catalog with essay by Donald M. Halley, Jr. [Reference to McG. p. 6; work listed p. 8; ill. plastic sculpture "Three Carrots" p. 14]; amplified version of essay reprinted in *Art-Scene*, vol. 1, no. 5, February 1968 [Bib. no. 11].)

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. "Artists Under Forty," August 16 - September 15. (Selected by William C. Agee, from permanent collection. Included plastic sculpture "Mand.")

Washington Gallery of Modern Art. "Art in Washington, 1969," September 25 - 29. (Exhibition marked publication of art book/calendar Art in Washington, 1969, Leslie Judd Ahlander, ed. [Bib. no. 1]; displayed work of 15 Washington artists illus. in book. Included plastic sculpture "Plastic Form.")

Witte Memorial Museum, San Antonio, Texas. "Award Winning Artists Southeast and Southwest," November 17 - December 8. (Catalog [McG. work listed p. 14; ill. plastic sculpture "Pie Shape" p. 15]. Exhibition included work of 14 artists given awards by National Endowment for the Arts, 1967. See Chronology 1967.)

The Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York. "PLASTIC as Plastic," November 23 - January 12, 1969. (Catalog with foreword by Sandra R. Zimmerman [McG. work listed p. 14]. Included plastic sculpture "Pie Shape." Exhibition traveled under auspices of Smithsonian Institution to 12 locations across country, 1969 - 1971, including Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Oberlin College, Ohio, and University of Miami, Florida. Review: Bib. no. 17.)

The Brooklyn Museum, New York. "Some More Beginnings," November 26 - January 5, 1969. (Organized by Experiments in Art and Technology, in collaboration with The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Catalog with foreword by Billy Kluver [McG. work listed p. 63; ill. plastic sculpture "Three Freestanding Pie Shapes" p. 63]. Poster. Reference: Bib. no. 5.)

The Latin American Art Foundation, San Juan, Puerto Rico. "Plasticos Washington D.C. 1968," December - January, 1969. (Catalog with essay by Paul Richard [McG. discussed pp. 6 - 7; work listed p. 15; ill. plastic sculpture "Pie Shape" p. 14]. Other artists: Enid Cafritz, Geny Dignac, Juan Downey, Rockne Krebs.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. "1968 Annual Exhibition Contemporary American Sculpture," December 17 - February 9, 1969. (Catalog [McG. work listed p. 10]. Included two-piece plastic sculpture "Squinches.")

1969

Martha Jackson Gallery, New York. "Sculptures, Prints, Drawings by Sculptors," January 4 - 25. (Checklist [McG. work listed p. 2].)

Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. "Plastics and New Art," January 15 - February 25. (Catalog with essay by Stephen S. Prokopoff [McG. work listed p. 21; ill. plastic sculpture "Pie Shape" p. 16]. Included "Squinches" and "Pie Shape." Exhibition traveled to Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas, March 16 - April 13.)

Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C. "GiveAway," May 22. (Event organized by McG. and Douglas Davis, with cooperation of Gene Davis. Limited edition print/matchbook by Juan Downey. See Chronology. Reviews/References: Bib. nos. 19, 20, 23, 46, 47, 48, 59.)

The Detroit Institute of Arts. "Other Ideas," September 10 - October 19. (Organized by Samuel J. Wagstaff, Jr. Catalog with essay [McG. work listed p. 28; ill. plastic sculpture "Folded Piece with Scalloped Edges" p. 28]. Poster/invitation. Included also two other plastic sculptures "Soft Squinch," "T.V. Piece.")

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," October 4 - November 16. (With Sam Gilliam and Rockne Krebs. Mimeographed catalog with checklist and excerpts from extensive essay by Walter Hopps and Nina Felshin Osnos, written for never-published catalog [McG. discussed p. 4; work listed p. 7]; essay printed in full with illus. in *Art International*, vol. 14, no. 5, May 20, 1970 [Bib. no. 24]. Included environment "Modigar," tableau "Curtains," plastic wall sculpture "Children," and plastic sculptures "T.V. Pieces" and "Domes," among others. See Chronology. Reviews/References: Bib. nos. 18, 19, 20, 50, 51, 53.)

The Jewish Museum, New York. "A Plastic Presence," November 19 - January 4, 1970. (Organized by the Milwaukee Art Center. Catalog in two parts with introduction by Tracy Atkinson [McG. work listed p. 60; ill. detail "Curtains" p. 61; color ill. detail "Curtains" printed on transparent plastic pages ("Trans-Vision")]. Exhibition traveled to Milwaukee Art Center, January 30 - March 8,

and San Francisco Museum of Art, April 24 - May 24, 1970. Review: Bib. no. 21.)

Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida. "The Washington Painters," December 1 - December 28. (Catalog with introduction by James Harithas [McG. discussed p. 9; work listed p. 25; ill. tableau "Curtains" p. 21]. 17 artists. Exhibition traveled to The Jacksonville Art Museum, Florida, February 5 - March 1, 1970.)

1970

University of Alabama Gallery of Art, Tuscaloosa. "Art Now," January 12 - February 9. (Selected by Walter Hopps. Catalog/brochure with statement [McG. discussed p. 3; work listed p. 2]. 9 Washington artists.)

The Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland. "Washington: Twenty Years," May 12 - June 21. (Organized by Diana F. Johnson. Catalog with essays by D.F. Johnson, Ellen Hope Gross, and Arlene Corkery, and detailed chronology and bibliography of Washington art scene 1947 - 1969 [References to McG. pp. 21, 29 - 37, 44]. Poster. 42 artists. Included large tableau "Vectrafiber Piece" designed for exhibition. See Chronology. Reviews: Bib. nos. 56, 57.)

1971

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. "The Washington Room," January. (With Donald Corrigan and Sam Gilliam. Mimeographed catalog [McG. work listed p. 4; ill. drawing for large work "Mirror Tableau" p. 4; statement by the artist p. 5]. See Chronology.)





Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond. "Eight Young Washington Artists," January 4 - 23. (Poster. Included plastic sculptures "T.V. Pieces.")

The Madison Art Center, Wisconsin. "D.C., An Exhibition of Washington Area Artists," February 7 - March 31. (Catalog with essay by Elizabeth Beloit [Reference to McG. p. 12; work listed p. 15; ill. plastic sculpture "Dome" p. 3]. 11 artists.)

Art Gallery, State University College at Potsdam, New York. "Washington Art," February 26 - March 24. (Selected by William Christenberry; organized by Peter Thomas. Catalog with introduction by Renato Danese [McG. discussed p. 4; work listed p. 6; color ill. sculpture/tableau "Dossett" p. 15; brief biography pp. 22 - 23]. 13 artists. Exhibition traveled to State University of New York at Albany, April 1 - April 25.)

The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida. "Transparent and Translucent Art," March 2 - March 28. (Catalog with introduction by Lee Malone [McG. work listed p. 12; ill. plastic sculpture "T.V. Piece" p. 12]. Exhibition traveled to The Jacksonville Art Museum, Florida, April 8 - May 2.)

Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. "New Washington Painting," April 16 - May 25. (Organized by Sidra Stich. Catalog/poster with essay [McG. work listed panel 4]. Other artists: Tim Corkery, Sam Gilliam, Sheila Isham, Enid [Cafritz] Sanford. Included tableau "Curtains," plastic sculptures "Lexan" [two versions]. Review: Bib. no. 61.)

Spring Joint Computer Conference, Convention Hall, Atlantic City, New Jersey. "The Boardwalk Show," May 18 - 20. (Organized by Protetch-Rivkin Gallery, Washington, D.C. Catalog [Ill. McG. work "Name Change Document" p. 17].)

Galerie Simonne Stern, New Orleans. "One of Each," May 29 - June 17. (Poster. Included plastic sculpture "Square Ribbed Grid.")

Columbia Museum of Art, South Carolina. "Eight Washington Artists," November 3 - December 3. (Catalog with introduction by Gunther Stamm [McG. discussed pp. 5 - 6, 8; work listed p. 10; color ill. sculpture/tableau "Dossett" p. 15; brief biography p. 19].)

1972

Georgetown College Gallery, Georgetown, Kentucky. "Two Washington Sculptors," March 12 - 30. (With William Christenberry. Organized by Robert L. Williams. Catalog/poster with introduction [McG. discussed on reverse; illus.: composite "Name Change" photograph, sculpture/tableau "Dossett," on reverse]. Included also environment "Modigar," several drawings. Exhibition traveled to The J.B. Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky, April 4 - 30.)

Mississippi Arts Festival, State Fairgrounds, Jackson. "Sam Gilliam & Ed McGowin," April 25 - 30. (Organized by The Mississippi Art Association. Brochure [McG. discussed panel 4]. Poster. Included sculpture/tableau "Dossett.")

1973

Philadelphia Art Alliance. "Washington Sculptors," February 8 - March 4. (Organized by William Travis. 16 artists. Included six plastic sculptures "Pie Shapes." Exhibition traveled to Glassboro State College, New Jersey, March 8 - April 2. Poster at Glassboro.)

Washington Gallery of Art. "Drawings and Small Works," February 17 - March 17. (Catalog/brochure with statement by Renato Danese and Nina Felshin [McG. work listed panel 3]. 37 artists. Included two maquettes for large tableaux "7-1-78," "8-1-96.")

Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C. "The Art of Light and Power," May 13 - 16. (Organized by Edward Cutler and Thomas P.K. Radford, for R O Products, Inc. Catalog [McG. discussed p. 7; work listed p. 14; ill. drawing for proposed sculpture "Foshee" p. 6]. Other artists: William Christenberry, Rockne Krebs, Fred Pitts. Included large environment "7-1-96" designed for exhibition.)

1974

Indianapolis Museum of Art. "Painting & Sculpture Today 1974," May 22 - July 14. (Organized by the Contemporary Art Society of the Indianapolis Museum. Catalog with introduction by Richard L. Warrum [McG. work listed p. 59; ill. painting "Red Stuffed Sculpture with Mirrors" p. 59].)

Galerie Darthea Speyer, Paris. "Group Show," December 14 - January 20, 1975. (Included several "dog" drawings.)

1975

Gallery 641, Washington, D.C. "The Alabama Bag," January 24 - March 1. (Exhibition of 10 Washington/Baltimore artists formerly associated with University of Alabama. Silkscreen print [on shopping bag] issued in limited edition. Included tableau "Bed with Sheets." Review: Bib. no. 77.)

London Art Gallery, London, Ontario, Canada. "15 American Artists from the Corcoran," April 4 - May 6. (Catalog with foreword by Roy Slade [McG. work listed p. 32]. Included modular plastic wall sculpture "Children.")

Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston. "Gulf Coast, East Coast, West Coast," May 16 - June 15. (With George Green and Nina Sobel. Organized by James Harithas. Catalog in preparation, with essays by J. Harithas and Paul Schimmel. Included large environment "Auto Wreck." See Chronology. Reviews: Bib. nos. 79, 80.)

Bibliography

BOOKS

- 1. Ahlander, Leslie Judd, ed. Art in Washington, 1969, Washington, D.C., Acropolis Books, 1968. (Reference to McG. in Introduction; brief biography and statement by the artist, ill. plastic sculpture "Plastic Form," facing Gallery List. Ill. work exhibited in "Art in Washington, 1969," Washington Gallery of Modern Art, September 25-29, 1968.)
- 2. Footlick, Jerrold K., ed. Careers, Princeton, New Jersey, Dow Jones Books, 1969. (Chapter 4, "Artist," pp. 31-39, details McG. career through November, 1968. Reprint of Douglas Davis article, "Getting a Start in the Art World," The National Observer, November 18, 1968, p. 24 [Bib. no. 45].)
- 3. Newman, Thelma R. *Plastics As An Art Form,* Philadelphia, Chilton Book Company, 1969 (revised edition). (Illus. p. 79: McG. assembling vacuum-formed sculpture, and plastic sculpture "Black-multicolor Black.")
- 5. Schwartz, Therese. Plastic Sculpture And Collage: Designs, Materials, Methods, New York, Hearthside Press, Inc., 1969. (Reference to McG. p. 42. Ill. p. 48: plastic sculpture "Three Free-standing Pie Shapes"; ill. p. 82: plastic sculpture "Purple Knobbed Cube.")

PERIODICALS

1963

6. Ahlander, Leslie Judd. "Washington Notes." Art International, vol. 7, no. 3, March 25, pp. 68-71 [McG. p. 71], ill. p. 71. (Review of 1962 solo show, Corcoran Gallery of Art, remarking on paintings on plastic; ill. painting "Red on Plastic.")

1964

7. Alloway, Lawrence. "Seven U.S. Painters ..." Americas, vol. 16, no. 7, July, pp. 39-41 [McG. p. 41], ill. p. 41. (Reprint of catalog essay for "Nine Contemporary Painters: USA," The Pan American Union; ill. painting "Nota.")

1967

- "Across the Land." The Art Gallery Magazine, vol. 10, no. 5, February, ill. p. 39. (Ill. plastic sculpture "Los," included in "Annual Exhibition 1966 Contemporary Sculpture and Prints," Whitney Museum of American Art.)
- 9. (B.)attcock, (G.)regory. "In the Galleries" (subhead "Now What?"). Arts Magazine, vol. 41, no. 8, Summer, pp. 55-65 [McG. p. 55], ill. p. 57. (Review of "Young Artists, Their Work: A Show," Martha Jackson Gallery, remarking on McG. plastic sculptures; ill. plastic sculpture "Purple Knobbed Cube.")
- 10. Rose, Barbara. "Washington Scene." Artforum, vol. 6, no. 3, November, pp. 56-57 [McG. p. 57], ill. p. 56. (General analysis of Washington art, remarking on McG. "mastery of new materials"; ill. plastic sculpture "Bullets.")

- 1968
- 11. Halley, Donald M., Jr. "Painting: Out From The Wall." ArtScene, vol. 1, no. 5, February, pp. 8-13 [McG. p. 12], ill. p. 13. (Amplification of catalog essay for "Painting: Out From The Wall," Des Moines Art Center; ill. plastic sculpture "Three Carrots.")
- 12. Hudson, Andrew. "Washington." *Artforum*, vol. 6, no. 7, March, pp. 60-63 [McG. p. 62]. (Brief evaluation of McG.)
- 13. Rose, Barbara. "A Gallery Without Walls." *Art in America*, vol. 56, no. 2, March-April, pp. 60-71 [McG. p. 62], ill. p. 62. (Discussion of 20 young artists; analysis of McG. plastic work in extended caption to ill. plastic sculpture "Four.")
- 14. Gruen, John. "Art in New York" (subhead "Edward McGowin"). New York, vol. 1, no. 11, June 17, pp. 14-15 [McG. p. 14]. (Review of 1968 solo show, Martha Jackson Gallery.)
- 15. (E.)dgar, (N.)atalie. "Reviews and Previews" (subhead "William [sic] McGowin"). Art News, vol. 67, no. 4, Summer, pp. 12-18, 54 [McG. p. 16]. (Review of 1968 solo show, Martha Jackson Gallery.)
- 16. (S.)imon, (R.)ita. "In the Galleries" (subhead "Edward McGowin: Sculpture"). Arts Magazine, vol. 43, no. 1, September October, pp. 59-68 [McG. p. 64]. (Review of 1968 solo show, Martha Jackson Gallery.)
- 17. Adams, Alice. "The New Heart of Plastics." Craft Horizons, vol. 28, no. 6, November-December, pp. 28-37, 55-56 [McG. pp. 30, 55], ill. p. 33. (Review of "PLASTIC as Plastic," Museum of Contemporary Crafts; ill. plastic sculpture "Pie Shape," with explanatory caption p. 32.)

1969

- 18. Davis, Douglas. "Washington on the Rise." Arts Magazine, vol. 43, no. 4, February, pp. 50-51. (Several references to McG. as one of group of interesting young artists, mentioning forthcoming "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," Corcoran Gallery of Art.)
- 19. Benson, Legrace G. "The Washington Scene." Art International, vol. 13, no. 10, Christmas, pp. 21-23, 36-42, 50 (McG. pp. 21, 23, 41, 50), ill. p. 42. (Lengthy discussion of origins and current state of contemporary art scene in Washington, covering "GiveAway" event [see Chronology] and analyzing McG. explorations of color suspension in plastic [p. 41]; ill. detail environment "Modigar" [caption lists as "Untitled construction"], included in "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," Corcoran Gallery of Art.)



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975



Detail, "Chicken Tableau," 1975



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975

20. Davis, Douglas. "Washington Letter."

Arts Magazine, vol. 44, no. 3, December

- January 1970, pp. 53-54, ill. p. 53.

(Review of "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin,"

Corcoran Gallery of Art [remarking on

"Modigar" and "Curtains"], and

"GiveAway" event; ill. plastic sculpture

with contents "GiveAway Box.")

1970

- 21. Ratcliff, Carter. "New York Letter." Art International, vol. 14, no. 1, January 20, pp. 87-99 [McG. pp. 93-94]. (Detailed discussion of environment "Curtains," in "A Plastic Presence," The Jewish Museum.)
- 22. (J.)acobs, (J.)ay. "Washington." The Art Gallery Magazine, vol. 13, no. 6, March, pp. 29-32, 82-83, 85-86 [McG. p. 31]. (Lengthy discussion of current Washington art scene, including brief reference to McG.)
- Davis, Douglas. "Art As Act." Art in America, vol. 58, no. 2, March-April, p. 31. (Discussion of "GiveAway" event.)
- 24. Hopps, Walter and Nina Felshin Osnos. "Three Washington Artists: Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin." Art International, vol. 14, no. 5, May 20, pp. 32-42 (McG. pp. 32, 39-42), illus. pp. 40-42. (Lengthy discussion of three artists' work; was to have been essay for [never-issued] catalog of "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," Corcoran Gallery of Art; detailed description and analysis of McG. works in exhibition, including "Modigar," "Curtains," conical plastic sculptures "Domes," untitled modular plastic wall sculpture ["Pie Shapes" (This work, now in collection of Corcoran Gallery of Art, recently has been given the collective title "Children.")], plastic wall sculptures "T.V. Pieces." Color ill. modular plastic wall sculpture "Children" [caption lists as "Untitled"], p. 40; illus. "Domes" [cap-

tioned "Untitled"] and "Curtains," p. 41; ill. detail "Modigar," p. 42. See Chronology.)

1971

25. Davis, Douglas. "Washington." Arts Magazine, vol. 45, no. 4, February, p. 46, ill. p. 46. (Review of "Erotic Snatches," Protetch-Rivkin Gallery; ill. three stills from "Erotic Snatches.")

1972

26. Forgey, Benjamin. "New Art, New Galleries, New Scene!" Art in America, vol. 60, no. 1, January - February, pp. 104-109 [McG. p. 105], color ill. p. 104. (Description of recent changes in Washington art scene, with brief analysis of current McG. work "linking conceptual art ... to the object" [see Chronology 1970] in extended caption to color ill. mixed-media sculpture/tableau "Dossett," included in 1972 solo show "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art.)

1973

- 27. Bourdon, David. "Washington Letter."

 Art International, vol. 17, no. 4, April, pp. 65-67, 104 [McG. p. 66], illus. p. 66. (Detailed review of 1972 solo show, Corcoran Gallery of Art [large environment "Walled Room with Mirrors"]; illus.: exterior of room, and reflection of room's contents in mirror.)
- 28. Sollins, Susan. "Washington Report." Arts Magazine, vol. 48, no. 1, September-October, pp. 53-55, ill. p. 55. (Several references to McG., including detailed reviews of "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art [see Chronology], and 1972 solo show, Corcoran Gallery of Art; ill. painting [captioned "Drawing"], proposal for mixed-media tableau, "7-1-87," included in 1974 solo show, Pyramid Galleries.)

1974

- 29. "National Scene." The Art Gallery Magazine, vol. 17, no. 4, January, ill. p. 29. (Ill. painting, proposal for sculpture, "7-1-91," included in 1974 solo show, Pyramid Galleries.)
- 30. Forgey, Benjamin. "D.C. Roundup." Art News, vol. 73, no. 6, Summer, pp. 64-65 [McG. p. 65]. (Evaluation of McG. work, including review of 1974 solo show, Pyramid Galleries, with special mention of walled room environment "Room for Leaving" [now in collection of The National Collection of Fine Arts].)
- 31. Williams, Robert L. "Metamorphic Oasis." Sculpture Quarterly, vol. 1, no. 4, Summer, pp. 6-7 [McG. p. 6]. (Several references to McG., including "Name Change" process and artistic activities of McG. and author at graduate school, University of Alabama. See Chronology 1964.)



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975

NEWSPAPERS

1962

- 32. Ahlander, Leslie Judd. "Talented Newcomer At Corcoran." *The Washington Post*, December 23, p. E-9. (Review of 1962 solo show, Corcoran Gallery of Art.)
- 33. (Getlein, Frank.) "Late Medieval Art In Baltimore Show" (subhead "Corcoran Gallery"). *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C., December 23, p. B-12. (Review of 1962 solo show, Corcoran Gallery of Art.)

1964

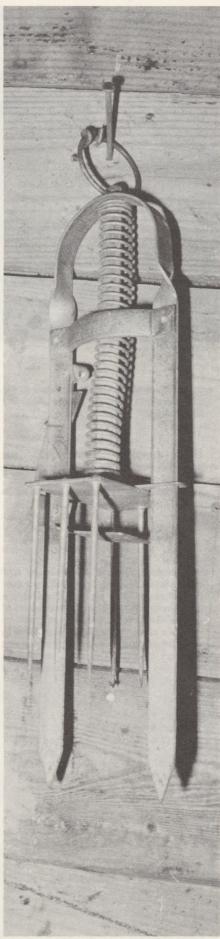
- 34. Ahlander, Leslie Judd. "Henri Shows Art of Creative Mind." *The Washington Post*, March 8, p. G-8, ill. p. G-8. (Review of 1964 solo show, Henri Gallery, remarking on experiments in real and perceived depth in work; ill. painting-construction "Homux.")
- 35. Getlein, Frank. "Dehn Exhibition an Example Of Artist With a Message" (subhead "Henri Gallery"). *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C., March 8, p. F-7. (Review of 1964 solo show, Henri Gallery.)
- 36. White, Jean M. "Art School a "Small Business"." The Washington Post, August 4, p. B-1, ill. p. B-1. (Article on founding of McGowin-Bright Art School, Alexandria, Virginia; see Chronology; ill. McG. and Harold Bright in school.)

1965

- 37. Donnelly, Tom. "LBJ's Eyes Will Light Up." The Washington Daily News, January 18, p. 17, ill. p. 7. (Interview with McG. on preparation of Johnson-Humphrey inaugural mural and on current work, statement by McG. on desire to avoid being put in categories; see Chronology; ill., with extended caption, McG. and mural.)
- 38. "Drawing is Basic to Art McGowin Tells Pen Women." Northern Virginia Sun, Arlington, Virginia, April 9, p. 6, ill. p. 6. (Article on McG. talk on importance of drawing as indicator of deepest artistic feelings; see Chronology 1964; ill. McG. and women.)
- 39. Cheshire, Maxine. "Something's Missing in the Kitchen" (subhead "The "Swingingest" Party"). *The Washington Post*, October 3, p. F-3, illus. p. F-3. (Article on McG. helping to paint interior of old house for demolition party; see Chronology; illus. guests at party with paintings on walls.)

1967

- 40. Getlein, Frank. "The Avant-Garde Never Looked Better in Washington." *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C., July 30, p. G-1. (Lengthy article on move of Henri Gallery from Alexandria, Virginia to Washington, D.C. location, and review of "Opening Show," noting new McG. plastic sculpture "Bullets.")
- 41. Secrest, Meryle. "Is What's Happening Art or Artifice?" The Washington Post, October 1, p. H-3, illus. p. H-3. (Article on McG. as originator and teacher of "New Media" course at Corcoran School of Art, emphasizing his experiments in vacuum-



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin," 1975

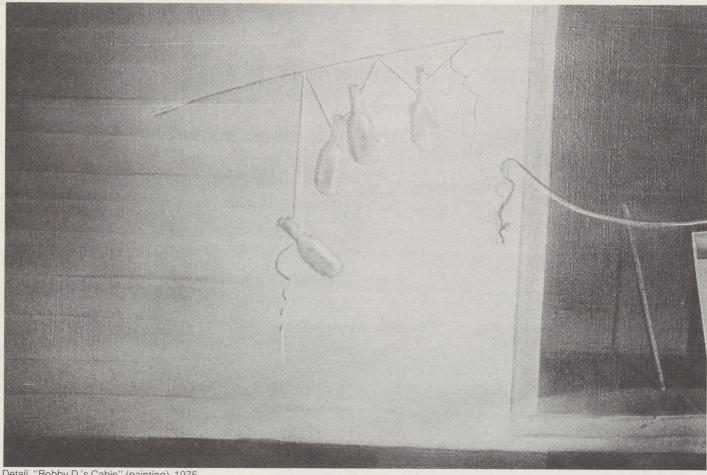
- forming plastic; see Chronology; illus. McG. and students vacuum-forming plastic sculptures.)
- 42. Harney, Tom. "Beauty and the Bulges." The Washington Daily News, November 3, p. 34, illus. p. 34. (Article on McG. fabricating plastic sculptures, and preview of 1967 solo show, Henri Gallery; illus. McG. working on sculptures.)
- 43. Richard, Paul. "Art Teacher Practices Technique He Preaches." *The Washington Post*, November 12, p. K-7, illus. p. K-7. (Review of 1967 solo show, Henri Gallery, describing McG. methods of forming and painting plastic; illus. untitled sculptures.)
- 44. Forgey, Benjamin. "Art: Comparing an Object-Maker and a Realist Painter." *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C., November 19, pp. F-3, F-9 [McG. p. F-3]. (Review of 1967 solo show, Henri Gallery, calling McG. "prolifically inventive.")

1968

45. Davis, Douglas. "Getting a Start in the Art World." The National Observer, November 18, p. 24, illus. p. 24. (Lengthy, detailed article on McG. career to date, emphasizing personal history and professional advancement rather than artistic development; illus.: McG. and wife in front of modular plastic wall sculpture "Children," plastic sculpture "Los," numerous examples of modular plastic wall sculptures "Pie Shapes." Article reprinted in Jackson Daily News, Jackson, Mississippi, January 23, 1969, p. 3, and, without illus., as chapter 4, "Artist," in Careers, Jerrold K. Footlick, ed. [Bib. no. 2], pp. 31-39. See Chronology.)

1969

- 46. Richard, Paul. "'Absolutely Free' \$3000 Canvases," The Washington Post, May 14, pp. F-1, F-7, ill. p. F-7. (Preview of "GiveAway" event, detailing its origins and preparation; ill. Douglas Davis, Gene Davis and McG. discussing event; see Chronology. First part of article quoted in "The Washington Scene," Legrace G. Benson, Art International, vol. 13, no. 10, Christmas 1969 [Bib. no. 19].)
- 47. Richard, Paul. "A Giveaway in the Name of Art." *The Washington Post*, May 23, p. B-1, illus. p. B-1. (Review of "GiveAway" event; illus. preparations for and activities at event.)
- 48. Gold, Barbara. "Free Art Is Not Just a Stripe." *The Sunday Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, June 8, pp. D-1, D-19, ill. p. D-1. (Review of "GiveAway" event, discussing its implications; ill. Gene Davis and Douglas Davis [McG., though listed in caption, not in ill.].)
- 49. "Anatomy of an Accident." The Washington Star, August 31, "Sunday" magazine, color ill., front cover. (Ill. commissioned McG. tableau of auto wreck; anticipates later tableaux; see Chronology.)
- 50. Richard, Paul. "Corcoran's Stunning Show." *The Washington Post*, October 4, pp. F-1, F-5. (Review of "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," Corcoran Gallery of Art, discussing "Modigar." See Chronology.)



Detail, "Bobby D.'s Cabin" (painting), 1975

- 51. Forgey, Benjamin. "The Third Wave." The Washington Star, October 12, "Sunday" magazine, pp. 8-13, color ill. p. 8. (Preview of "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," Corcoran Gallery of Art [written before opening of exhibition], and lengthy discussion of careers of three artists, relating them to development of Washington art scene; ill. Gilliam, Krebs, McG. in Corcoran Gallery.)
- 52. Richard, Paul. "Dissolving a Marriage." The Washington Post, November 6, pp. D-1, D-3. (Article on mock divorce of two Washington artists at Lincoln Memorial; "ceremony" performed by McG; see Chronology.)
- 53. Richard, Paul. "A Local Exhibition with International Appeal, In the Tradition of Washington's Color Painters." The Washington Post, November 9, pp. F-1, F-6, color. ill. p. F-1. (Article on reactions to "Gilliam, Krebs, McGowin," Corcoran Gallery of Art, also discussing perception of color in McG. plastic works; ill. McG. in front of modular plastic wall sculpture "Children.")

1970

54. Richard, Paul. "Moving Art." The Washington Post, January 3, pp. D-1, D-5, illus. pp. D-1, D-5. (Review of 1969 solo show, Henri Gallery, describing McG. manipulation of color in plastic wall sculptures "T.V. Pieces"; illus.: McG. with "T.V. Piece," and detail of "T.V. Piece.")

- 55. Cohen, Andrea O. "Ed McGowin." The D.C. Gazette, Washington, D.C., April 20 - May 3, p. 4. (Interview with McG. and article on career, with analysis of work. McG. characterized as desiring change in work, avoiding "set reputation or mode of working.")
- 56. Gold, Barbara. "Art that Droops, Smokes and Bounces." The Sunday Sun, Baltimore, Maryland, May 10, p. D-1, ill. p. D-1. (Preview of "Washington: Twenty Years." The Baltimore Museum of Art, describing McG. construction of large tableau "Vectrafiber Piece" designed for exhibition; ill. completed tableau. See Chronology.)
- 57. Gold, Barbara. "D.C. Art More Than Memorials." The Sunday Sun, Baltimore, Maryland, May 17, p. D-20. (Review of "Washington: Twenty Years," The Baltimore Museum of Art, noting effect of "Vectrafiber Piece.")
- 58. Forgey, Benjamin. "Will Inspiration Come in 12 Names?" *The Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., October 1, pp. A-1, A-6, illus. p. A-1 [late edition: pp. B-1, B-4, illus. p. B-1]. (Article on "Name Change" process, describing projected McG. name changes for coming year and associated art works; preview of "Erotic Snatches," Protetch - Rivkin Gallery; see Chronology. Illus.: McG. as McG., and as "Alva Fost.")

59. Richard, Paul. "'New Name' on the Art Scene." The Washington Post, October 21, p. B-7, ill. p. B-7 [note: different portions of article omitted in early and late editions; for complete article, see both editions]. (Article on "Name Change" process, emphasizing break with past work and relating to "GiveAway" event; review of "Erotic Snatches," Protetch-Rivkin Gallery. Ill. McG. "as a young Alva Isaiah Fost.")

- 60. Collier, Alberta. "Kohlmeyer Painting Show Opening" (subhead "McGowin Exhibit"). The Times-Picayune, New Orleans, Louisiana, January 17, section 3p. 4. (Review of 1971 solo show, Galerie Simonne Stern, describing interaction of light and color in plastic works.)
- 61. Loercher, Diana. "Washington and Boston Painters." *The Christian Science Monitor*, Boston, Massachusetts, April 24, p. 9. (Review of "New Washington Painting," Massachusetts Institute of Technology, remarking on "Curtains.")
- 62. Conroy, Sarah Booth. "A Gift for the Corcoran." The Washington Post, May 17, p. B-1, ill. p. B-1. (Article on purchase for Corcoran Gallery of Art, by Friends of the Corcoran, of modular plastic wall sculpture "Children" [called "untitled" in article and ill. caption]; ill. members of Friends in front of "Children"; see Chronology.)

63. Fish, Margaret. "Name Changes Give Artist Ideas for Plastic Sculpture." The Milwaukee Journal, July 4, part 5 - p. 6, ill. part 5 - p. 6. (Detailed article on McG. stay as artist-in-residence at University of Wisconsin [see Chronology], discussing "Name Change" process; review of 1971 solo show, University of Wisconsin, describing "Mirror Tableau"; ill. McG. installing "Mirror Tableau.")

1972

- 64. Richard, Paul. "Pyramiding McGowin." The Washington Post, March 4, p. B-9, ill. p. B-9. (Review of 1972 solo shows, Pyramid Galleries and Henri Gallery, discussing variety of McG. work; ill. McG. constructing one of "Infinite Spaces" at Henri Gallery.)
- 65. Forgey, Benjamin. "What Is Art? Here Are, at Least, Some Tentative Ideas." *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C., March 12, p. D-7. (Review of 1972 solo shows, Pyramid Galleries and Henri Gallery, relating work to "Name Change" process and describing "trompe l'oeil in reverse" of "Infinite Spaces" pieces at Henri Gallery.)
- 66. Richard, Paul. "Into the Reaches of a Mind." The Washington Post, October 7, pp. C-1, C-2, illus. p. C-1. (Review of "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art, discussing interaction of various pieces and noting new freedom in McG. work. Illus.: McG. pose reproduced 12 times in composite "Name Change" photograph, McG. exploding "Dairy Queen." See Chronology.)
- 67. Forgey, Benjamin. "A Little of Everything And It Works." The Sunday Star and Daily News, Washington, D.C., October 8, p. G-7, illus. pp. G-1, G-7. (Detailed review of "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art, describing "Name Change" process, analyzing individual works in exhibition, relating current exhibition to past work, and commenting on McG. idea of constant change in art. Illus.: composite "Name Change" photograph, p. G-1; large environment "American Sangra," p. G-7.)
- 68. Gold, Barbara. "What's in a Name?, Asks Ed McGowin." *The Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, October 8, p. D-29, ill. p. D-29. (Review of "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art, noting variety in current exhibition and break with past work; ill. "7-1-78 (Hologram).")
- 69. Johnson, Lincoln F. "McGowin Exhibit Debate-Provoking." *The Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, October 12, p. D-10. (Article on reactions to "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art, commenting on censoring of works in exhibit and noting McG. remarks in gallery talk at Museum; see Chronology.)
- 70. Schoettler, Carl. "2 Works by Name-Change Artist Get a Line Drawn by Museum." The Evening Sun, Baltimore, Maryland, October 31, p. C-1, ill. p. C-1. (Article on censoring of two works in "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art; ill. McG. and "Lasterday" display [identified in caption as "Reshaped records"].)

- 71. Tannous, David. "Name Change: Ed McGowin." Woodwind, Washington, D.C., October 31, p. 10, illus. p. 10. (Review of "Name Change," The Baltimore Museum of Art, commenting on "Name Change" process and ideas behind it; illus.: "Name Change" document, and composite "Name Change" photograph.)
- 72. Fonvielle, Wayne. "McGowin's Art 'Anything You Say'." The Appalachian, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina, December 8, p. 1, ill. p. 1. (Article on McG. stay as artist-in-residence at Appalachian State University, noting McG. desire to sell all possessions and be left "with absolutely nothing but my mind"; ill. McG. and friend installing work for 1972 solo show, Appalachian State University. See Chronology.)

1973

73. Forgey, Benjamin. "Sweepstakes of the Small" (subhead "McGowin"). *The Evening Star and Daily News*, Washington, D.C., January 12, p. C-7. (Review of 1972 solo show, Corcoran Gallery of Art.)

1974

- 74. Forgey, Benjamin. "Uses of Bad Taste." Washington Star-News, January 11, pp. E-1, E-5, ill. p. E-1. (Review of 1974 solo show, Pyramid Galleries, describing ambiguous effects of paintings and strong impact of walled room environment "Room for Leaving"; ill. painting "Bedroom.")
- 75. Richard, Paul. "Reflections in Retrospection." *The Washington Post*, January 11, pp. B-1, B-6, illus. pp. B-1, B-6. (Review of 1974 solo show, Pyramid Galleries, remarking on relationships between paintings, environment "Room for Leaving," and previous work. Illus.: detail of painting "Mirror Box," p. B-1; detail of painting "Red Stuffed Sculpture with Mirrors," p. B-6.)
- 76. Bomboy, Bonnie. "Radical, Ceaseless Exploration for New in Art Marks Ed McGowin's Career." The Hattiesburg American, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, February 3, p. 6-C, ill. p. 6-C. (Interview with McG. on early career and current work; ill. McG. and daughters unrolling early painting "Mand.")

1975

- 77. Secrest, Meryle. "Galleries: From Alabama to Haiti." *The Washington Post*, February 1, p. E-7, ill. p. E-7. (Review of "Alabama Bag," Gallery 641, describing tableau "Bed with Sheets"; ill. tableau.)
- 78. Jordan, George. "McGowin Paintings Excellent." *The Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, Louisiana, May 4, section 2-p. 8, ill. section 2-p. 8. (Review of 1975 solo show, Galerie Simonne Stern; ill. gallery director with painting "The Bedroom.")
- 79. Crossley, Mimi. "The Coastal Scene." The Houston Post, May 18, "Spotlight" magazine, p. 34. (Review of "Gulf Coast, East Coast, West Coast," Contemporary Arts Museum, describing large environment "Auto Wreck" and relating it to McG. background.)

80. Moser, Charlotte. "The Ins and Outs of 'Place' at CAM." The Houston Chronicle, May 25, "Zest" magazine, pp. 15-16 [McG. p. 15]. (Review of "Gulf Coast, East Coast, West Coast," Contemporary Arts Museum.)

STATEMENTS BY THE ARTIST

1971

- 81. Interview with Dr. David W. Ecker, Professor of Art and Art Education, New York University. Approximately five hours' tape recording, conducted February 19, 1971, at opening of McG. 1971 solo show, Frostburg State College, Maryland. Extensive discussion of "Name Change" process and works completed to date. Tapes are part of large research library of recorded interviews of artists, critics, teachers and children, conducted by Dr. Ecker during past 15 years, as part of preparation for book on aesthetic inquiry. Tapes are in process of being transcribed and cataloged.
- 82. Film "People Working," made in spring by staff of WNVT, Northern Virginia Educational Television, Annandale, Channel 53. Includes scenes of McG. vacuumforming plastic sculptures, talking about his work and materials. Film available as one of series of 30 20-minute color programs on art for students, cataloged in *Images & Things*, Alice M. Schwartz, ed., National Instructional Television Center, Bloomington, Indiana, 1972.

1972

83. Untitled five-page typewritten statement ["Ten Years Ago"], completed February, explaining ideas of change in art and efficacy of artist's engaging in multitude of different inquiries simultaneously, written in collaboration with David Tannous. Reprinted in abridged form in "Name Change," catalog of 1972 solo show, The Baltimore Museum of Art, pp. 6-9.

1974

84. "Three Projects: Harrison, Mock, McGowin." Art in America, vol. 62, no. 1, January-February, pp. 68-73 [McG. pp. 72-73], illus. pp. 72-73. (Amplification of "Name Change" process.)

Exhibition photographs by JOHN GOSSAGE

All characters and locales mentioned in this publication are imaginary; any resemblance to actual persons is coincidental.

Design Consultant: Howard Goldstein

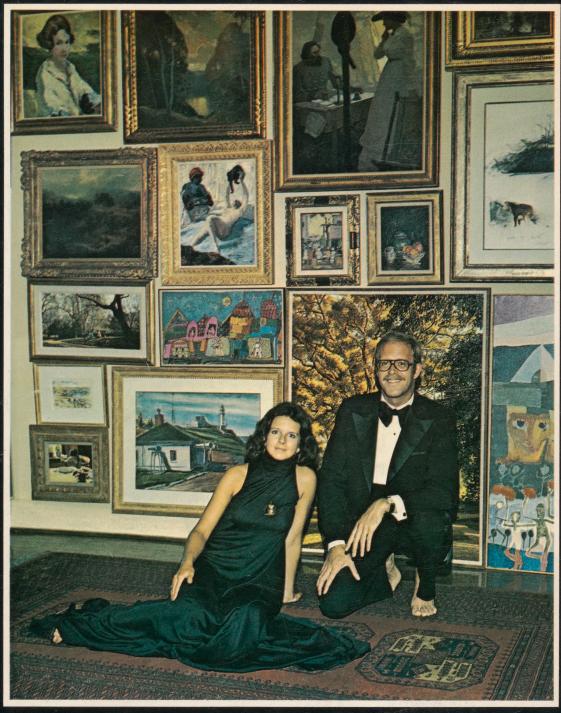
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